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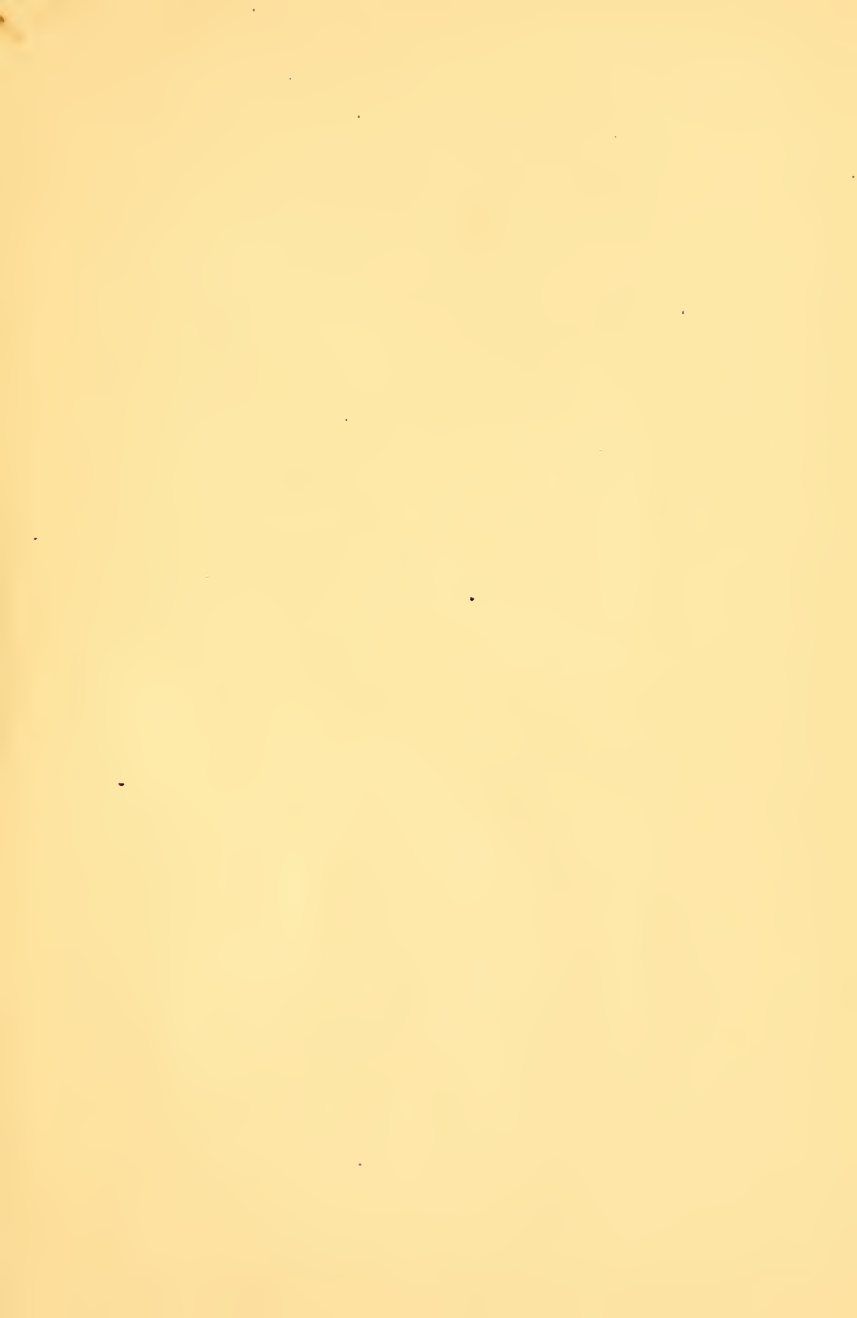
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LEE'S INVASION  
OF NORTHWEST VIRGINIA





LEE'S INVASION  
OF NORTHWEST VIRGINIA  
IN 1861

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BY  
GRANVILLE DAVISSON HALL

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FALSTAFF—I will not lend thee a penny.

PISTOL—Why, then the world's mine oyster  
which I with sword will open.

MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.

SIR ANDREW—Plague on't! an' I thought he  
had been valiant and so cunning in fence,  
I'd have seen him damned ere I'd have  
challenged him.

TWELFTH NIGHT.

1911

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## RECONNOISSANT.

Fifty years after the event, there are signs of a re-nascent literature dealing with the southern rebellion, which apologists for that attempt at national homicide prefer to describe as the "War between the States." In this semi-centennial year, the American citizen may well suspend his mad pursuit after the almighty dollar and take a few minutes off to recall the events and portents which a half century ago darkened the western hemisphere. This slender volume is a modest attempt to trace the salient features of a single episode in the great tragic story; the opening chapter in a volume whose "finis" no man could then forecast.

The sole attempt to justify the rebellion in its initial stage was the protest against "coercion." This was simply a demand by the conspirators, who had seized the machinery of all the Southern state governments, that the lawful authority of the nation should not interfere with their plans or pleasure in the trifling matter of upsetting the United States government. Yet when the next stage had been reached, coercion was the first weapon drawn in Virginia against every citizen who resisted the usurpation which had seized the Commonwealth. It was first employed in the State capital to compel a sovereign convention to pass an ordinance of secession against the expressed will of two-thirds of the voters of Virginia.

Lee's invasion of Northwest Virginia was an attempt to apply the same argument to the loyal people

west of the Allegheny mountains, whose representatives had been "coerced" in the Convention; to silence them by military terrorism, as their fellow-loyalists had been silenced in the East. It was the first blow in a war forced between neighbors and brethren who had no quarrel of their own.

The men used for this purpose were drawn chiefly from the Shenandoah Valley; and there is nothing in evidence to show that they had much heart in the work. In the earlier Virginia, The Valley had stood shoulder to shoulder with the West in a fight against the discrimination and injustice of the Tidewater, demanding larger citizenship and equal taxation. For these they had unitedly fought a battle which went back to the beginning of the century; had combined in popular conventions at Winchester and Staunton, the last of which, held in 1825, had sat as a deliberative body and formulated demands so forceful that they led to the assembling of the State Convention of 1829-30; and this proving barren of results, had renewed the struggle later in the Convention of 1850-51. In the crisis of 1861, the men of the Valley were little behind their western brothers in devotion to the Union; but under pressure of a deep-laid and adroit conspiracy and later military terrorism, they were forced, "like dumb-driven cattle," into a rebellion which the great majority of them abhorred.

Virginia was not the only one of the seceding States in which a majority of the people were friendly to the government. If there could have been throughout the South in the autumn of 1860 a plebiscite on the issue of secession even as free as the vote in Virginia

in February, 1861, on that issue in the guise of "Reference," it would have shown a very large element in those States who did not want secession. But in the States farther south, even more than in Virginia, public opinion was controlled by a violent minority, and the timid well-intentioned citizens shrank from an avowal of opinion or sentiment sure to subject them to denunciation. So that an unconstrained vote in the Coast States expressive of the real sentiments of the people there was then—and had been for many years—impossible.

It was part of the original Confederate plan to overrun and hold all Virginia to the Ohio river. The execution of this was entrusted to Gen. Lee. The failure of the scheme was signal. The struggle lasted only a few months, but it was sufficient. For while, after this first campaign, there were raids to obtain supplies and guerrilla warfare in some counties, there was never serious danger of the subjugation of Western Virginia by the Confederacy.

Gen. Lee did not win any laurels in the Northwest. The forces he threw across the mountains were driven back. When, after the defeat and death of Gen. Garnett, he took personal command and made an attack on Reynolds at Cheat Mountain, he failed; failed again at Elkwater; failed the third time when he tried to launch Floyd through the mountain passes of the Gauley and upper Kanawha. Lee's renown was won in defensive war, fighting on the inner and shorter lines, on familiar ground. His genius was Fabian, not Napoleonic. He gained no fame in purely aggressive war. To his complete failure in Western Virginia was added his discomfiture when, after two

years experience, he undertook to carry the war into Pennsylvania.

Following the failure of the Rebellion, the South needed a hero. Jefferson Davis did not quite fill the bill. In Virginia, at least, Gen. Lee has taken the place, though it must be added that Stonewall Jackson is a strong claimant in the popular mind.

The real ground for the exalted esteem in which Lee is held in Virginia is probably not so much his military achievements as his lovable personality and the modest demeanor which colored his later life. He was a man not only of fine social culture but of brains and scholarship. When, as an army officer, after careful deliberation, he deserted his standard and put himself in the front of the organized war for its overthrow, he clearly understood what he was risking. He was putting to the touch not only life and fortune, but his future place in world history. If he should win, he would be an illustrious patriot. If he failed, he knew he would be entitled to the reward all history accords to traitors. He had Benedict Arnold before him as an example. When the end came, Lee had the sagacity to understand that under the unprecedented magnanimity of the government, there was nothing for him but silence, submission and a humility becoming one who had been the instrument of irremediable injury to the people he loved.

To men who attempt great crimes and fail, the world is more charitable than they deserve. We may all, however, do justice to the personal virtues of General Lee without condoning the irreparable wrong done by him in turning his sword against the govern-



ment which had bred and fed and trusted him; which had never, in the weight of a feather, wronged him or his people; which, indeed, had been their faithful and obedient servant from its foundation down to the hour when they assailed it.

“O, Liberty,” quoth Madam Roland, standing at the foot of the guillotine, “what crimes are committed in thy name!” So, in the name of patriotism men have lent themselves to great wrongs. But in time the inexorable truth vindicates itself, and the real crimes of history are pilloried in the impartial verdicts of mankind. The American Rebellion, judged by the motives which inspired it and by the lack of justifying reasons, will take its place in the catalogue of indefensible crimes. Even out of these, it does appear, good is educed, and

“Ever the right comes uppermost,  
And ever is justice done.”

The invasion of Northwest Virginia was a mistake—a part of that tremendous mistake which began with the firing on Sumter. In moral relations, there are many proofs of error; in military dialectics, there needs be only one—failure. No less able an adviser than George W. Summers warned the Richmond junta against it. Governor Letcher lent himself to it, yet had his doubts. Colonel Porterfield, in a letter printed between these covers, admits the error. It is not unlikely some of the eminent Western Virginia statesmen then exiled in Richmond exercised an undue influence in pressing the enterprise, more for personal than for military reasons.

The facts recited in this narration are derived chiefly from the official publication known as the "Rebellion Record." The endeavor has been to bring them into chronological and related order, so as to make a consecutive story. From this remark is excluded (of course) General Rosecrans' statements before the joint committee of Congress on the Conduct of the War, the "Story of a Scout," also the preliminary chapter on the mutinous conditions in Virginia at the close of the Eighteenth Century, when Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr were organizing for the overthrow of the Federal Party—or of the Federal Government. This is an incident in Virginia annals little known to the present generation. The reader may find it an interesting parallel to the preparations in Virginia, with similar purpose, in 1860 and 1861.

No connected story of this campaign has ever before been printed. The present essay does not claim to be exhaustive of even the brief time and limited territory covered by it. A compilation of this kind of necessity omits much which lends interest to historical narration. This lack is in some measure compensated by the authenticity of what is given, comprising the controlling events which enter into the historical movement.

An acceptable addition to the official record is some pertinent comment on the campaign and its crowning event—the battle of Rich Mountain—written by Col. George A. Porterfield, of Charles Town, West Virginia. This appears in his letters appended to the narrative. These shed the light of apposite criticism just where it seems to be due.

The military operations in Northwest Virginia quickly following the investment of Gen. Lee with command, developed the first serious collision between Northern and Southern armies in the field. Compared with later movements, this campaign is a minor event. Yet it was not without consequences, immediate and remote. It gave the first shock to the theory then prevalent in the South that Northern men would not stand up on the martial field before the superior gentlemen of that section. It proved that courage, endurance and military skill were not the exclusive possession of those bred upon a servile soil. It furnished a commander for the army upon whom depended the defense of the national capital. Out of this grew weighty consequences, military and political. It resulted also in the exemption of Northwest Virginia from further military attack and the security throughout the war of Ohio, eastern Kentucky and western Pennsylvania. Not least important, it made easy the restoration of civil government in Virginia, followed by the creation of a separate State west of the Alleghenies—an event far-reaching and momentous in the sequel—which, in the words of Abraham Lincoln, “turned that much slave soil into free and consummated an irrevocable encroachment upon the cause of the Rebellion.”

GLENCOE, ILLINOIS, March, 1911.



## VIRGINIA IN REVOLT MORE THAN A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

More than sixty years prior to the Rebellion in 1861, Virginia was on the verge of open revolt against the United States. She had ratified the constitution; but there had been a dissentient element—considerable and influential—which, under the stimulation of Mr. Jefferson's scarcely disguised hostility to the Federal leaders, had steadily through the years waxed in bitterness.

This country has long been accustomed to regard South Carolina as the most disaffected of the States; yet inexorable facts entitle Virginia to dispute this unenviable eminence. Her action in sending a statue of Gen. Lee to the National Hall of Fame does her no credit. That hall is supposed to be the valhalla where the fame of the great and good citizens of the Republic is to ripen through the ages and furnish inspiring examples to the youth of rising generations. For Virginia to place there the figure of one whose sole claim to distinction is that he betrayed the government which had educated and cherished him, and tried to tear down the fabric of civil liberty Virginia's own illustrious citizens had builded in an earlier age—men whose names and work are revered all over the civilized world—is an offense against the patriotism of the country and a slur upon such names as Washington, Madison, George Mason and John Marshall. It indicates that Virginia has learned little from her costly and bloody experience.

When President Washington neared the close of his second term, he acquainted Mr. Jefferson with his determination not to be a candidate for a third. Mr. Jefferson, believing this opened the presidential field to him, became still more industrious than he had been in sowing the seed of dissension; more censorious and demonstrative in his hostility towards the Federal leaders; to whom he imputed a design to subvert the republic and establish a monarchy. Despite this covert but widely spread detraction, it failed to give him the coveted place when Washington's successor was chosen in 1796. John Adams was elected President, and the Virginia statesman had to be content with second place. For a time, there was an apparent truce. It was only apparent. A still-hunt went on; and the opposition party, calling itself "Republican," waxed in strength and in rancor under the special culture of Mr. Jefferson in Virginia and Aaron Burr in New York.

The attitude of the French Revolutionary government greatly embarrassed Mr. Adams' administration, as it had embarrassed that of Washington. French emissaries in the United States committed lawless acts which threatened international complications. Their conduct became so insolent and offensive as to force the enactment of what were called the alien and sedition laws. This legislation was used by the anti-administration party to add fuel to the "Republican" flame. On the authority of the secret despatches of the French minister, Fauchet, it is stated that the French government had information upon which it imputed to the Jeffersonian party the design of causing a general explosion of revolt to subvert the United States government.

Mr. Jefferson had been sent to France as plenipotentiary at a time when the French revolution was in embryo. He witnessed the assembling of the States-General. He was consulted, on the one hand, by the ministers of Louis XVI and, on the other, by popular leaders like Bailey and Mirabeau. He came home in 1789 to take the post of Secretary of State in Washington's cabinet, deeply imbued with the ideas of the revolutionary leaders; and this sympathy pervaded and colored his political conduct thenceforward.

For more than a hundred years the country has accepted Jefferson as the "father" of the party which came into power in 1800 as "Republican," and which afterwards, calling itself "Democratic," held control of the government, with scarcely a break, down to 1861. But John Minor Botts, of Virginia—who was no mean figure in Southern politics prior to the Rebellion—held that this paternal relation belonged to Aaron Burr.\* It is in evidence that in 1800 the Republican party was very evenly divided touching this claim of paternity. In the election for president that year, Burr and Jefferson each received the same number of electoral votes. It was only through the magnanimity of Hamilton that Jefferson won the prize—under circumstances which will be mentioned later. In that contest, the Republican party—and the Democratic ever after—were dominated by the fundamental idea of diluting the powers of the central government and, at its expense, strengthening the sovereignty and importance of the individual states. This theory of

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\*It is a curious fact that Botts' father was one of the counsel who defended Burr when on trial for treason.

government is generally credited to Jefferson. It was, in fact, the theory of the group of politicians with whom he co-operated—mostly in the South—and belonged rather to that era in our national history than to any one leader.

Mr. Jefferson was sent to France in the spring of 1785, as successor to Dr. Franklin, and was absent from the country through the entire formative period out of which emerged the new form of a national government. He did not yield a cordial support to the Constitution framed in his absence. It created a federal nation, and that was not what he wanted. He was willing to have a nation for protection against foreign aggression, but not for domestic government. A mere league of states for home purposes was his ideal—as if it were possible to have this and present the front of a nation to the rest of the world.

Under the skillful and tireless misconstruction of Mr. Jefferson and his accomplished coadjutor, Mr. Burr, the energetic measures of Mr. Adams' administration were colored and construed to such purpose that as early as 1798 Virginia had become a hot-bed of "Republican" reaction. Even Mr. Madison, who had been one of the most pronounced—as he was one of the ablest—of the nationalists in the convention which framed the Constitution, yielded to the reactionary furor and wrote the "Resolutions of '98," passed by the Virginia Assembly December 21st of that year, while Mr. Jefferson wrote the cognate declarations put forth next year by the legislature of Kentucky. It was in these Kentucky resolutions the remedy of "nullification" was first suggested. This was brought forward thirty odd years later by Cal-



houn and put down with a strong hand by President Jackson. Both the Virginia and Kentucky declarations embodied the creed of a government without the backbone of national authority; with the individual states sovereign and independent of obligation to each other—a theory tried out in the prior Confederation and found a calamitous failure. In the U. S. House of Representatives, a member denounced the alien and sedition acts, declaring the people ought to resist their execution, and he “hoped in God they would.”

In Virginia the fury of revolt appears to have completely dominated the Assembly. In December, 1796, they passed an act “authorizing the executive to procure arms for the defense of the Commonwealth.” This is just what Letcher did prior to the spring of 1861. By resolution passed in November, 1796, the executive was directed to proceed to execute this act. In January, 1798, the Assembly passed an act to establish arsenals in the counties of Prince Edward and Orange or Culpepper, and to have “buildings erected for the preservation of arms and fortifications thrown up for the defense of the arsenals.” Each arsenal was to be capable of holding ten thousand complete stand of arms; and to insure a supply of arms, the executive was empowered to establish a manufactory in the vicinity of Richmond and required to procure six hundred pistols, holsters, swords, scabbards and belts for the equipment of cavalry. The executive was also authorized to issue arms and ammunition to the regiments within the limits for which the arsenals were erected.

By acts of Assembly passed in 1796, 1798 and in January, 1799, taxes were imposed on all classes of

taxable property, including slaves over twelve years of age, for the purposes contemplated by the warlike legislation described. When we reflect how, through the whole history of Virginia, the ancient regime resisted taxation of this sacred form of property, we may realize the intensity of the war fever which would warrant the legislature in a measure of this kind!

In January, 1800—the presidential year—an act was passed directing the executive “to distribute without delay among the several regiments of militia, according to their strength, two-thirds of all the arms and accoutrements belonging to the State or which might be procured under appropriations made.”

Thus, at the opening of the year in which the election for President was to be held, the Commonwealth was equipped for war! For what? Against whom?

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Relating to the dangerous conditions shown by the foregoing details, Gen. W. R. Davie, of North Carolina, in June, 1799, wrote Justice Iredell (one of the judges of the United States Supreme Court, appointed by Washington), and commenting on the exasperated party feeling in the country, remarked that Virginia was the only State of which he despaired. He said he had conversed with some gentlemen who had been traveling in other states and had recently been at the Petersburg (Virginia) races, who had “returned with the firm conviction that the leaders in Virginia were determined to overthrow the General Government; that if no other measure would effect this, they would risk it upon the chance of war.” He added: “I under-

stand that some of them talk of 'seceding from the Union,' while others boldly assert the policy and practicability of severing the Union, alleging that Pennsylvania would join them; that Maryland would be compelled to change her politics with her situation; that the submission and assistance of North Carolina was counted on as a matter of course, and that the two southern states (South Carolina and Georgia) would follow."

Judge Iredell, in a letter to his wife, January 24, 1799, said:

"The General Assembly of Virginia are pursuing steps which directly lead to civil war; but there is a respectable minority struggling in defense of the Government, and the Government itself is fully prepared for anything they can do and resolved, if necessary, to oppose force with force."

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In the election of 1800, the Republican party, under the lead of Jefferson and Burr, won the presidency. Had the result been adverse to them—had Mr. Adams and the Federal party triumphed—who is prepared to affirm that Virginia would not then have headed a revolt against the continuance of that party in control of the Government, as she did sixty-one years later against the change of control arising from the election of Lincoln?

The Constitution provided that the candidate receiving the highest electoral vote should be President. Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Burr each received the same number of votes—seventy-three. There being no choice, the election was thrown into the House of Representatives. It depended on Federal votes which of these men should be President. A choice was not

reached without difficulty. Mr. Jefferson was sounded to know what assurances he was willing to give touching certain vital issues. He declined to give any pledges. He was elected by Federal votes, on an appeal made by Hamilton in a spirit of patriotism and personal magnanimity which elicited high praise from John Randolph, who succeeded Jefferson as Washington's secretary of state. Mr. Randolph in after life often declared that Jefferson owed his election to Hamilton, and that to Mr. Hamilton's action in this crisis the country owed the safety of the republic. Mr. Randolph knew thoroughly the inside of Jeffersonian and Virginia politics at that time; and such a statement from him has a deep significance.

In explanation of his course, Mr. Hamilton declared if there was a man in the world he "ought to hate," it was Jefferson. To those who know with what rancorous misrepresentations Jefferson pursued Hamilton for years, even when associated with him in Washington's cabinet, this declaration will seem fully justified. Mr. Hamilton said that, on the other hand, he had never had any personal complaint to make against Burr. But he regarded Burr as a bold, daring man of unprincipled ambition, who had no aim but his own aggrandisement and who was restrained by no moral scruples. It was vain to hope he could be won over to Federalist views. He would combine the rogues of all parties and overrule the good men of all parties. On the other hand, Jefferson had pretensions to character. He was fanatic in his democracy and at the same time crafty, persevering and insincere, but a far less dangerous man than Burr. If Jefferson were elected, the whole responsibility

would rest upon the Republican party; if Burr, the responsibility would be upon the Federalists, for the people had intended to vote for him for Vice-President only, in which place he would be harmless.

Hamilton's course in giving the presidency to Jefferson, for such reasons as stated by him, easily connects with his later death by the hand of Burr on the heights of Weehawken.

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The political revolution thus outlined, accomplished one hundred and ten years ago under threat of rebellion and the overthrow of the Government, was fundamental and far-reaching. It set the example which, being followed, gave to the world the American Civil war of 1861-65. The party which thus came into power in 1801 held the control thus gained through a practically unbroken succession for sixty years. At last the time and the conditions came for another change of control. The party which had held the reins so long made war rather than surrender them in obedience to the verdict of the people rendered in strict conformity to the Constitution and laws. Had John Adams been chosen President in 1800, there is reason to believe Virginia would have tendered then the issue of secession, or some other form of disruption, with the dread alternative of civil war.

## THE CIVIL PRELIMINARIES IN 1861.

The rebellious conspiracy in Virginia was so ripe for co-operation with the Cotton States by the opening of the year 1861, and so entirely in control of the executive and legislative State machinery, that the General Assembly was called by Gov. Letcher to meet in extraordinary session January 7th. Despite the false pretenses put forward in his message as reasons for this astonishing proceeding, the sole object was to commit Virginia to the Southern revolution, already in full tide and only waiting for Virginia to embark; and from the day the legislature met, events moved toward that end with a swiftness and precision which showed how completely the programme for Virginia had been prepared.

Disregarding precedents requiring consent of the voters before a convention could be called, the Assembly on the 14th of January ordered an election for delegates to a convention to meet February 13th. The second day after the Legislature met, they voted a declaration that they were "unalterably opposed" to any attempt by the Government to "coerce into reunion or submission" any State attempting to withdraw from the Union. A week later they adopted another declaration that if the differences between the North and the South failed of adjustment, "then, in the opinion of the General Assembly, every consideration of honor and interest" demanded Virginia should ally herself with the "slaveholding States of the South."

Thus did the legislative body undertake to stake out for the sovereign body about to be assembled a road which led straight to Montgomery. The Legislature of Virginia had no constitutional authority to call a convention, nor to deal itself with national questions. This rested only in the voters of the State. The most the Assembly had the right to do was to submit to the voters whether they would authorize a convention. The vote on "reference" shows that if the question of calling a convention had been submitted, none would have been called. The legislature did submit to the people when electing delegates the question whether their action should go back to them for approval; and the answer to that question was, by a vote of two to one, that no action affecting the State's relations to the Federal Government should have any effect until approved by subsequent vote of the people of Virginia.

The vote on "reference" was, in the whole State, except eight small and remote counties, 100,356 for reference to 45,161 against. This shows that less than one-third of the voters of Virginia wanted secession. Yet in sixty days these proportions were reversed!

As the next logical step in the programme, the Convention was organized and controlled by the secession minority. John Janney, of Loudoun, who called himself a "Union man," was made President. In his address—blowing hot and cold—he apostrophised the American flag floating over the old capitol in which the Convention sat, and prayed it might "remain forever:" "provided," thus and so. "Provided always" Virginia had equal rights with other States

like New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania—as if she had not always had these, and more!

One of the things John Janney did to keep the flag flying over the Virginia capitol was, to appoint a committee on Federal relations, twenty-one in number, of whom only two proved faithful to the Union—and one of these not without reproach.

Another: When the Convention had appointed as commander-in-chief of the Virginia forces, Robert E. Lee—who within a month had received as a special mark of confidence at the hands of President Lincoln, a commission as a colonel of cavalry in the U. S. Army—President Janney had Lee brought into the Convention hall and, with spectacular ceremonial and effusive feeling, congratulated him on his traitorous desertion of the American flag, which he had taken an oath to defend, to accept command of the Virginia (Confederate) armies raised and to be raised in rebellion against it.

The history of this Convention need not be further recited here. Step by step, with military trim and energy, they marched straight to an ordinance of secession, which was passed in secret session, in *terrorem*, with injunction of secrecy till leave should be given to disclose. The secret league, eight days later reduced the once proud Commonwealth to the condition of vassalage under the Cotton-State Insurrection, with Jefferson Davis as absolute dictator and his minions riding rough-shod over her people.

Other measures taken by the Convention in betrayal of the people of Virginia, long before the date when those people had the right to decide by their votes whether there should be any secession or league



with the Southern Confederacy, are summarized by historian Virgil A. Lewis, in his volume, "How West Virginia Was Made," as follows:

Election of members of the Congress of the United States forbidden.

Alliance, offensive and defensive, made with the so-called Confederate States.

Constitution of the Confederate States adopted. Members elected to the Confederate Congress.

Officers who had sworn to support the Constitution of the United States released from their oaths.

All the people of Virginia absolved from their allegiance to the United States.

Capture of Harper's Ferry U. S. Arsenal, etc., Navy Yard and other U. S. property at Gosport; seizure of custom houses at Norfolk and Richmond.

Virginia formally admitted as a member of the Confederate States.

Even before the consummation of the secret league with Stephens, Virginia, east of the mountains and in many counties west of them, was under a despotism. When the farce of voting (May 23rd) whether they would ratify or reject the secession ordinance was staged, the people of Virginia were already muzzled and manacled. In Richmond, where John Minor Botts had received 1,800 votes as a candidate for the Convention against Randolph, only two votes were cast against the ordinance. So everywhere else within the Confederate lines. Only in a limited number of free counties in Northwest Virginia, did men dare exercise their electoral rights as citizens. The punishment of these recalcitrants, was the work undertaken by General Lee.

There is philosophic truth behind the old Greek axiom, that "Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad." Men filled with a blind fury cannot realize how close behind them marches retribution. Of a crisis in the French Revolution, Carlyle remarks:

"This, then, is the abomination of desolation; come suddenly, though long foreshadowed as inevitable. For to the blind all things are sudden."

When imbecile Louis XVI summoned the States-General as the last expedient to save the Bourbon regime, which for hundreds of years had ridden France like "an old man of the sea," how was he to foreknow that he was but opening the door to a lion which was waiting to devour him and his line? Driven by the imperious demands of the hour, he walked blindly into the jaws of the Revolution.

No more could the conspirators at the Virginia capital foresee that the Convention, summoned at their behest, without authority, as part of their plan to destroy what they could no longer control and to draw a line of perpetual warfare across this continent, was to be the "beginning of the end" of the mediæval oligarchy who had for more than two hundred years imposed a system of caste and savagery upon this country and ruled its political counsels for their own evil ends.

## THE MILITARY INITIATIVE.

### LEE IN THE SADDLE.

April 19th, the rank of Major-General of the military and naval forces of Virginia was created, and three days later Robert E. Lee, a colonel of cavalry in the United States Army, was nominated to the rank and confirmed by the Convention, with special honors and congratulations at the hands of President Janney.

Two days before, A. G. Richardson, Adjutant-General of Virginia, sent orders to Brig.-Gen. James H. Carson, Sixteenth Brigade, Winchester, directing him to issue "instant orders" to the brigade to be in readiness for service at a moment's warning to support a movement of State troops against the United States Arsenal at Harper's Ferry. Next day, similar orders were sent to Gen. Thomas Haymond, Fairmont, to give orders to the Third Division to be ready for service at a moment's notice, and that he "take measures effectually to prevent the passage of Federal or any other troops from the West eastward on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad." The brigadiers in Haymond's division were: Burton Fairfax, Preston county; J. H. Carson, Frederick county; James Boggs, Pendleton county; C. B. Conrad, Gilmer county; Bushrod W. Price, Marshall county; and John J. Jackson, Wood county.

The day the Secession ordinance was passed, the Convention appropriated \$100,000, with instructions to Letcher "to repel invasion."

## ORGANIZING REBELLION IN THE NORTHWEST.

### CONCENTRATIONS WEST OF THE MOUNTAINS.

The day following the consummation of the secret league of usurpation between the Convention and Alexander H. Stephens, the Confederate Secretary of War at Montgomery wired John Letcher, rebel Governor, to know at what points and in what numbers the military forces of Virginia were to be rendezvoused, adding: "For action here, an early answer is expected." May 1st, Letcher wired Secretary Walker in reply:

"Arrangements have been made to call out, if necessary, 50,000 volunteers from Virginia, to be rendezvoused at Norfolk, Richmond, Fredericksburg, Alexandria, Harper's Ferry, Grafton, Kanawha, Parkersburg and Moundsville."

In this reply is clearly disclosed the expectation that the Confederacy would take speedy possession of all Western Virginia to the Ohio river.

May 3rd, Governor Letcher issued a proclamation, calling on the State volunteer companies, where there were any, or when organized, to rendezvous "for the service of Virginia." Anticipating this proclamation, General Lee had already issued orders to carry out its objects. These orders did not obtain general publicity in Northwestern Virginia. They were circulated through secret channels among those only who were known to be in co-operation or sympathy with the Rebellion. So dominant was the Union sentiment, that the only open rendezvous established in

the Northwest at that time was at Fetterman, on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, two miles north of Grafton. Here Capt. William P. Thompson (son of Circuit Judge George W. Thompson, of Wheeling) put his Marion guards into camp. The Postmaster at Fetterman, it was said, was friendly to the cause and the Confederate correspondence during the occupation at Grafton was carried on through the Fetterman office, the Grafton office not being deemed trustworthy. Two or three days before the advance of the Union forces under Kelley and Morris, this rendezvous was moved up to Grafton, the arrival of about a thousand troops from the south sufficing to keep the Union people of Grafton quiet.

#### APPOINTMENT OF RECRUITING OFFICERS.

April 29th, Maj. Alonzo Loring, of Wheeling, was directed by Gen. Lee to "Muster into the service of the State such volunteer companies as offer themselves in compliance with the call of the Governor, take command of them and direct the military operations for the protection of the terminus of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and also of the road." Maj. Loring was further instructed to put himself in communication with Maj. Francis M. Boykin, Jr., who had been directed to give protection to the railroad in the vicinity of Grafton "with a view to co-operate, if necessary," and to report the number of companies he might muster into the service, the condition of their arms, equipments, etc.

April 30th, Gen. Lee directed Maj. Francis M. Boykin, Jr., "commanding Virginia volunteers, Weston, Virginia," to muster into the service of the State

such companies as might offer their services "for the protection of the northwestern portion of the State."

He was instructed to assume the command, to take post at or near Grafton (unless some other point should offer greater facilities for the command of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and the Parkersburg Branch); to "endeavor to obtain the co-operation of the officers of the road" and afford them every assistance in his power; also to endeavor to give quiet and security to the inhabitants of the country; to place himself in communication with Maj. Loring at Wheeling and co-operate with him if necessary; to report the number of companies he might muster, with suggestions as to the best means for the accomplishment of the object in view. He was advised that 200 "old flint-lock" muskets would be forwarded to him by Gen. T. J. Jackson, then in command at Harper's Ferry.

May 3rd, Gov. Letcher issued a proclamation authorizing the commanding general of the military forces of Virginia to cause to be mustered into the service of the State from time to time, as the public exigencies might require, such additional number of volunteers as he might deem necessary.

May 4th, Maj. Loring was notified by Gen. Lee that his authority to call out volunteers was limited to Tyler, Wetzel, Marshall, Ohio, Brooke and Hancock counties.

#### GEN. LEE'S AVANT COUREUR.

May 4th, Gen. Lee directed Col. George A. Porterfield of Jefferson county, to repair to Grafton and select a position for troops to be called into the serv-

ice, with a view to hold both branches of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad to the Ohio river. He was directed to co-operate with Maj. Loring of Wheeling, and to place a force on the Parkersburg branch, and was advised that Maj. Boykin would act under his orders.

Col. Porterfield was authorized to extend the call for volunteers to Wood, Wirt, Roane, Calhoun, Gilmer, Ritchie, Pleasants and Doddridge counties—to rendezvous at Parkersburg; to Lewis, Harrison, Monongalia, Taylor, Barbour, Upshur, Tucker, Marion, Randolph and Preston counties—to rendezvous at Grafton.

The muskets to be sent by Jackson from Harper's Ferry were to be distributed under Porterfield's orders. He was instructed that it was not intended to interfere with the peaceful use of the railroad, and he was to co-operate with its officers and agents and "aid them in the management of the road" as much as possible.

In a dispatch from Gen. Jackson to Gen. Lee, dated Harper's Ferry, May 7th, Jackson said: "An unarmed company in Harrison county has offered its services and I design arming it at Grafton." This, it is presumed, is the company which marched into Clarksburg from Romine's, May 20th, under command of Uriel M. Turner.

#### THE ENEMY'S COUNTRY.

May 10th, Maj. Boykin reported from Grafton to Gen. Lee:

"The feeling in nearly all our counties is very bitter, and nothing is left undone by the adherents of the old Union to

discourage those who are disposed to enlist in the service of the State. I find that organizations exist in most of the counties pledged to support what they term 'the Union.'"

Maj. Boykin deemed it impracticable to hold Grafton with the very small force which could be gotten together soon, and saw "no alternative but to send troops from the east for the present. This section" he said "is verging on a state of actual revolution, and many men who were true and loyal to the State, are afraid to leave their families among men who recognize as a leader John S. Carlile, who openly proclaims that the laws of the State should not be recognized."

Maj. Boykin thought they should have at least one battery and that 500 men would be sufficient to quell any disturbance which might arise "if a smaller force were sent."

He thought troops should be assembled at Parkersburg immediately and recommended that Judge William L. Jackson, formerly second auditor and afterwards lieutenant-governor of Virginia, be put in command at that place.\*

In reply to this, Gen. Lee wrote Maj. Boykin, May 11th, that he must "persevere and call out companies from well-affected counties and march them to Grafton." He advised that 400 rifles and some ammuni-

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\*Francis H. Peirpoint, in a speech from the balcony of the McClure Hotel, Wheeling, May 11, 1861, said: "An officer had come to Grafton to make a rendezvous for Letcher's troops 'if it was not offensive to the people.' But the b'hoys live at Grafton—100 of them, as good as ever trod the soil. They told this officer: 'Now, my friend, we are a hospitable people and we will be generous with you. We will give you until the next train starts to leave. But as sure as there is a God in heaven, if you come back this way, you will not get through.' He left by the first train."

The writer learns from good authority this reference was to Maj. Boykin.



tion had been ordered from Staunton to Maj. Goff, Virginia volunteers, Beverly,\* who had been directed to communicate with Porterfield and take his directions as to the disposition of the arms and ammunition. Gen. Lee did not "think it prudent to order companies from other parts of the State to Grafton, as it might irritate instead of conciliating the population in that region."

May 13th, Gen. Lee wrote Maj. Boykin again, to inform him that 600 additional rifles had been sent to Maj. Goff, at Beverly, to be subject to Col. Porterfield's orders. He stated that Maj. Goff had been ordered to muster troops in Randolph and adjacent counties, and it was hoped to obtain there a sufficient number for the needs of Grafton, as he deemed it "inadvisable to send troops from the East for the present."

#### COL. PORTERFIELD AT GRAFTON.

Col. Porterfield arrived at Grafton May 14th, and immediately reported to Gen. Robert S. Garnett, Adjutant General, Richmond, that the officers who had been directed to report to him were not present, nor was there any volunteer or other force there. He would proceed at once to ascertain the whereabouts of Maj. Goff's command. On account of the sparseness of the population, it would be difficult to get the various companies to act in concert. "After my return," he said, "I would desire as soon as possible to be reinforced by a detachment of not less than 250 men and a few pieces of artillery, if they can be spared from the command at Harper's Ferry."

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\*David Goff, brother of Nathan and Waldo P. Goff, of Clarksburg.

May 16th, Col. Porterfield wrote again to Adjt. Gen. Garnett:

PORTERFIELD TO GARNETT.

"In my last report I stated that I would first get possession of the arms sent to Maj. Goff, and then try to collect a force to occupy this place. I accordingly sent a messenger to Maj. Goff, at Beverly, about 50 miles distant, and proceeded to ascertain what force I could get, its condition and the sentiment of the people of the counties of Taylor, Barbour and Harrison. I also sent orders to the captains of companies, supposed to be armed, in the neighboring counties to bring their companies immediately to a designated point and there await my orders.

"The messenger returned from Beverly with the reply that nothing had been heard of the rifles, nor had Maj. Goff been informed that they were to be sent to him. This is a serious disappointment. Several companies in this vicinity are organizing and expecting to be furnished at once with arms and ammunition. I found a company organized at Pruntytown which will be ready to receive arms in a day or two. There is another at Philippi awaiting arms, and another in Clarksburg which will soon be ready. I have seen the officers of these companies. There are other companies forming in the surrounding counties, but all without arms and un-uniformed. This force when received will not for some months be more effective than undisciplined militia. There are but two companies in this vicinity known to be armed. One of these—Capt. Boggess', at Weston—has old flint-lock muskets, in bad order, and no ammunition. The other—Capt. Thompson, at Fairmont—has a better gun and some ammunition. These companies are now marching towards this point: are ordered to do so, at least. This is the only force on which I have to depend; and it is very weak compared with the strength of those in this section who, I am assured, are ready to oppose me.

"I have found great diversity of opinion and much bitterness of feeling among the people of this region. They are apparently upon the verge of civil war. A few bad men have done much mischief by stirring up rebellion among the people

and representing to them the weakness of the State and its inability or indisposition to protect them, the power of the government at Washington and their willingness to give any required aid to resist the State authorities. I am too credibly informed to entertain any doubt that they have been and will be supplied with the means of resistance. They and their accomplices have also threatened the property and persons of law-abiding citizens with fire and sword. Their efforts to intimidate have had their effect both to dishearten the one and encourage the other. Many good citizens have been dispirited, while the traitors have seized guns and ammunition of the State to be used against its authority. Arms in the hands of disbanded volunteer companies have been retained for the same avowed purpose.

“The force in this section will need the best rifles. Those at Harper’s Ferry which were injured by the fire, if fitted up, will do very well, as there will not be the same use for the bayonet in these hills as elsewhere; and the movements should be light infantry and rifle; although the bayonet, of course, would be desirable.”

May 19th, Gen. Lee wrote Col. Porterfield that 1,000 muskets and rifles for use of the troops under his command had been sent to Maj. Goff and Lieut. Chenoweth, of Beverly; that several hundred arms had also been sent, for the use of Porterfield’s command, to Gen. Jackson, at Harper’s Ferry; and that several companies had been directed to go with arms from Staunton to Beverly, “to gather strength as they pass along.”

#### SENATOR MASON ON INTERNATIONAL RIGHTS.

Ex-Senator James M. Mason, who had been directed to go to Maryland on a secret mission, wrote Gen. Lee from Winchester May 15th regarding the occupancy of Maryland Heights by Gen. Jackson; about which it appears Gov. Letcher had some scruples

as being an invasion of the sovereign State of Maryland. Mr. Mason said the occupancy of Maryland Heights was necessary to the command of the town of Harper's Ferry, and that a small body entrenched there could hold the position against a superior force. In reference to the right of Virginia to occupy the Heights, he said:

"I want to speak only of our right to fortify and hold those Heights, whether Maryland protest or no, putting aside the law of necessity and its sanctions. If Maryland were *suo jure* and a friendly contiguous power, the occupation of her territory, hostile and menacing to Virginia, gives the clear right in public law to Virginia to occupy her territory too, so far as necessary for self-protection; a right not to be questioned under existing circumstances by Maryland or any other power.

"But Maryland is not *suo jure*; she comprises one of the United States, a power now foreign to Virginia and in open hostility to us. Occupying her territory, therefore, is only occupying the territory of the enemy; nor is it invasion in the proper sense of that term, because the occupation is defensive and precautionary only, and not for aggression, and will cease as soon as the enemy withdraw from Maryland."

#### MAKES A MILITARY SUGGESTION.

Regarding the position of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, Mr. Mason said it was "important that a sufficient military force of our State should be exhibited and retained along that road at important points west of Harper's Ferry, at least as far as the western slope of the Allegheny mountains; and, as two such points," he said, "I would indicate Piedmont and Grafton. The numerous tunnels through the mountains, the numerous bridges across rivers and streams, and especially the expensive and complicated viaduct along Cheat river, in the Allegheny moun-

tains, furnish abundant places for such irremediable damage, provided we are in advance of the invaders.”

LEE ADMITS HIS FIRST FAILURE.

May 21st, Gen. Lee wrote Mr. Mason:

“Measures have been taken more than three weeks ago for securing control of both branches of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and for throwing a force into the disaffected region of the State; to carry out which Maj. Loring has been sent to Wheeling to protect the terminus of the main road and Col. Porterfield to Grafton with instructions to concentrate there three regiments, at Parkersburg one regiment, at Moundsville one regiment. These measures having in part failed, several companies have been sent from Staunton to Beverly, with instructions to gather strength as they pass through the country, for Col. Porterfield’s command. By this means it is hoped that a considerable force has been concentrated at Grafton by this time and loyalty in some degree engendered in the disaffected region of which you speak.”

MILITARY CENSORSHIP BY A WHEELING EDITOR.

In a letter written by Capt. Daniel Shriver of the (Wheeling) Shriver Grays, dated Harper’s Ferry May 19th, addressed to Gen. T. J. Jackson, in command there, Shriver says there were at that date between 300 and 400 Federal troops stationed on Wheeling Island, who had been regularly sworn into the United States service by Major Oakes and furnished with arms at request of citizens of Hancock, Brooke, Ohio and Marshall counties, “for the express purpose of resisting the authority of the State of Virginia. At this time,” says Captain Shriver, “A. W. Campbell, of the city of Wheeling, by published authority from Gov. Dennison, of Ohio, will not permit citi-

zens of Wheeling to ship provisions in any quantity over the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad."

#### RECRUITING AT FETTERMAN.

In report made by Col. J. M. Heck, of the 25th Virginia (Confederate) regiment, sometime after the battle of Rich Mountain, he states that May 24th he reported for duty to Col. Porterfield, who, he says, then held Fetterman with about 100 men. He adds that on the 25th of May Porterfield received six or seven recruits under Col. Turk; that May 26th Porterfield, with this small force, took possession of Grafton; and at midnight of the 26th Heck says he departed for Richmond, under instructions from Porterfield, to report the condition of the command at Grafton and the need of reinforcement.

#### HOW LEE WOULD DEAL WITH "TRAITORS."

Gen. Lee wrote Col. Porterfield May 24th acknowledging his letter of the 18th and expressing regret that he had "not been successful in organizing the companies of volunteers that you (he) expected. In answer to your inquiry as to the treatment of traitors," pursues the General, "I cannot believe that any citizen of the State will betray its interests, and hope all will unite in supporting the policy she may adopt."

#### MORE MUSKETS AND AMMUNITION.

May 27th Gen. Lee advises Col. Porterfield that he had ordered 1,000 muskets, with sufficient supply of powder and lead, to Beverly, escorted by Col. Heck and Maj. Cowen; and that Col. Heck had been instructed to call out all the volunteers he could along the route.

## B. & O. RAILROAD BRIDGES BURNED.

GEN. SCOTT CAUTIONS McCLELLAN.

May 21, 1861, Gen. Scott communicated (by letter) with Gen. McClellan, at Cincinnati, in command of the Department of the Ohio, evidently regarding the threatening aspect of matters in Northwest Virginia, though the paper does not appear among the official records, and May 24th he wired McClellan as follows:

“We have certain intelligence that at least two companies of Virginia troops have reached Grafton, evidently with the purpose of overaweing the friends of the Union in Western Virginia. Can you counteract the influence of that detachment? Act promptly, and Maj. Oakes, at Wheeling, may give you valuable assistance.”

Answering this, McClellan wired Adj. Gen. Townsend, May 26th:

“My time has been so much occupied I have been unable to reply to the General’s letter.

“I was engaged in maturing plans to carry out the General’s telegraph instructions when I learned by telegram that two bridges on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad near Farmington station had been burned Saturday night. I received this information late yesterday afternoon at Camp Dennison. Col. Kelley, of the First Virginia Volunteers, with his own regiment and four companies of the Second, are ordered by telegraph to move without delay from Wheeling towards Fairmont, guarding the bridges as they proceed. Col. Irvine, of the Sixteenth Ohio, was ordered to support the movement. Col. Steedman, of the Fourteenth Ohio, supported by the Eighteenth and two light guns, was ordered to occupy Parkersburg and the lines of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad towards Grafton.

“Col. Kelley left Wheeling about 7 a. m. today. Col. Irvine crossed at Benwood about 10 o’clock. Col. Steedman moved to Parkersburg about 10 o’clock.

"By telegraph this morning I directed the necessary supplies to re-establish telegraph communication and to repair bridges, etc., to be forwarded at once from Wheeling.

"Gen. Morris holds himself ready to move from Indianapolis on receipt of telegraphic orders, with from two to five regiments, should it become necessary. The regiments at Camp Dennison are in the midst of the process of reorganization for three-year service. By tomorrow one fine regiment will be ready to move and others will soon be prepared. I hope, however, that the forces already out toward Grafton will suffice for the end in view.

"I telegraphed Maj. Oakes, making him acting aide-de-camp temporarily, that he might be able to interfere authoritatively should it prove necessary.

"P. S.—Nothing is yet known by the public of this movement. I have thus far succeeded in keeping it secret and hope to do so until Grafton is occupied or the troops have considerably advanced. Have this instant heard from Col. Kelley at Mannington, Va., as follows:

"Agreeably to your orders, I left my camp this morning at 5 o'clock with my regiment and Capt. Hayes' company of the Second regiment. Just arrived here without accident or casualty. Found the road in good order. Bridges all safe and guarded by the railroad company and loyal citizens. Will move forward to the burned bridges. This town will be occupied by Col. Irvine, who follows. We will repair bridges as soon as possible. I hear that Parkersburg is occupied.'"

May 26th, Gen. McClellan wired Col. B. F. Kelley, First Regiment Virginia Volunteers, Wheeling:

"If you have reliable information that bridges of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad have been burned you will at once procure transportation on that railroad and move your whole command, including the separate companies of Virginia volunteers not attached to your regiment, as near to Fairmont as can be done without endangering the safety of your command. Leave a sufficient guard to protect the bridges and other structures most liable to destruction. Col. Irvine, of the Sixteenth



Ohio, is ordered to cross the river and support you. Telegraph me constantly as to the state of affairs and how much support you need. Conduct the preliminaries of your movement with as much secrecy as possible and see that the telegraph conveys no intimation of it in any direction. Consult Maj. Oakes freely. The move must be made with the greatest promptness to secure the bridges. Take at least one week's rations. Accoutrements will follow you tomorrow. I count on your prudence and courage. Preserve the strictest discipline. See that the rights and property of the people are respected, and repress all attempts at negro insurrection."

Under same date, Gen. McClellan wrote Col. Kelley:

"I have telegraphed you this evening, instructing you to make a forward movement on Fairmont. The principal reason for this order was the burning of the bridges, which caused me to anticipate by some two or three days the more carefully prepared measures I had contemplated with the intention of not only securing the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad but also of driving all the armed Secessionists out of Western Virginia.

"In your present movement you will be careful to run no unnecessary risk; for it is absolutely necessary that we should not meet with even a partial check at the outset. The chief object of your advance is to prevent any further destruction of the railroad. You will not move on Grafton without restoring the bridges in your rear, unless you receive positive information that Col. Steedman's command has actually reached Grafton or a neighboring point where you can without doubt unite with him. Col. Steedman occupies Parkersburg tomorrow morning with two regiments and will then proceed to take possession of the line of the B. & O. R. R. as far towards Grafton as he can with safety. Col. Irvine will be under your orders."

Under same date, Gen. McClellan instructed Col. Irvine to cross the river at Benwood and support Col. Kelley's movement:

"Leave a detachment to guard the bridge over the Ohio and secure Wheeling. Advance the rest of your command at least as far as Fish creek (?). Render all assistance in preserving the bridges. I do not expect you to be driven back. Support will soon reach you if necessary. Preserve the strictest discipline. Take one week's rations. See that the rights and property of the people are respected, and repress all attempts at negro insurrection."

Under same date, Gen. McClellan instructed Col. J. B. Steedman, commanding Fourteenth Regiment, Marietta, Ohio, to cross the river and occupy Parkersburg, and that the Eighteenth Ohio at Athens would support him. He was ordered to move by rail towards Grafton as far as prudent, leaving sufficient guards at Parkersburg and the bridges as he advanced. He gave the same instructions to protect rights of person and property, concluding with the instruction to "repress all attempts at negro insurrection."

Under same date, Gen. McClellan wired Brig. Gen. Thomas A. Morris, Indianapolis:

"You will probably be ordered tomorrow to move with, say, two regiments to Wheeling or Parkersburg. Circumstances may change this, but be ready. Keep this secret; and when you do move give out Pittsburg or some other point as your destination."

Under same date, Gen. McClellan issued a proclamation to the people of Western Virginia, wherein he assured them, among other things, that he would "with an iron hand, crush any attempt at insurrection on the part of the slaves."

Under same date, he issued an address to his troops, ordering them to "cross the frontier and enter upon the soil of Virginia." It would seem from the reitera-

tion of this injunction about negro insurrection that the General was laboring under some grave misapprehension as to the state of facts in the territory he was invading. There was not an acre of the earth's surface anywhere at that date in less danger of servile insurrection than Western Virginia. The insurrection of white people was the only one that need have cost Gen. McClellan a moment's anxiety.

May 30th, Gen. McClellan reported to Adj. Gen. Townsend that Col. Kelley had occupied Grafton at 2:30 P. M. that day, "without the loss of a single life," the Secessionists having abandoned the place before his arrival. "The Colonel," he said, "will pursue them on the Beverly road and endeavor to capture at least some of the arms that they sent away before they retreated." Col. Kelley's movement had been retarded by the necessity of rebuilding the burned bridges. On arriving at the place where the bridges had been burned, he had at once sent an advance guard to secure the important bridge across the Monongahela one mile east of Fairmont. He commended Col. Kelley highly and suggested he be made a brigadier of volunteers.

The General added to this report:

"I am now organizing a movement on the valley of the Great Kanawha; will go there in person and endeavor to capture the occupants of the Secession camp at Buffalo, and then occupy the Gauley bridge."

## PORTERFIELD'S RETREAT TO PHILIPPI.

### HIS OWN REPORT OF HIS REASONS.

May 29th, from Philippi, Col. Porterfield reported to Adj. Gen. Garnett that on the 27th, at Grafton, he had received reliable information of a contemplated movement from the West by which a large body of men were to be precipitated upon him in a few hours' time. "I was assured," he said, "that about 1,500 Federal troops had collected at Marietta, some at Bellaire, 1,000 to 1,500 on the island opposite Wheeling;" and, in this state of things, he adds:

"I ordered some of the bridges of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad northwest of Fairmont to be destroyed; which order was carried into effect by the destruction of two between Farmington and Mannington, about 35 miles northwest of Grafton.

"I also sent out an expedition to destroy a bridge of the Northwestern Virginia Railroad 50 or 60 miles west from Grafton. The object of this expedition has, I am informed, been accomplished, although my party has not returned. I caused a small bridge on the same road about 15 miles west of Grafton to be destroyed, but I learn it has been repaired by the company so trains can pass over it.

"On the evening of the 27th I received information of the arrival by the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad of a body of troops variously estimated at from 1,000 to 3,000 at the burned bridges near Mannington. It was supposed these men would be followed by others as soon as the house-cars which contained them could be returned to the Ohio river. In this state of things I inquired of Gen. Johnson by telegraph (the Grafton end of which only was under the control of our friends, so far as I know) if he could reinforce me. For reply,

I was informed that no men could be sent from his command at Harper's Ferry.

"On the 28th, learning from most reliable persons that the invading force had reached Fairmont, 20 miles northwest of Grafton, and thinking that the latter point, from its topography and the character of its population (a good part of which would have united with our enemies upon their appearance), was not an eligible one for us, and considering our very inadequate supply of provisions and ammunition—particularly caps—and that our number of infantry was small (not more than 550) and the want of any sort of training or military discipline among our men; and being informed that other bodies of men besides those first spoken of had passed the burned bridges by means of temporary repairs of them and approached Fairmont, I concluded to remove the State arms and stores to Philippi, about 15 miles in our rear; there establish a depot in a friendly country; to concentrate such volunteers as were on the way or could be easily and speedily attracted to that point, and there to organize and strengthen my command. I met on the way an unarmed company of volunteers from Upshur; and at Philippi I was joined by a well-armed company of horse from Rockbridge. I have been compelled to send home, for want of arms to supply them with, a company of horse from Pocahontas, and to dismiss to their homes for a short time a like company raised in Barbour.

"As soon as I can organize my command, which I hope to do soon, I will return to some more eligible point in the neighborhood of Grafton which will enable me to command both railroads; and in the meantime I hope to be able more effectually to cut off the railroad communications east and west of that place."

In the foregoing, Col. Porterfield speaks of the force with which he retired to Philippi as not more than 550 infantry. It was authentically reported in the Wheeling papers at the time that on the 23rd of May about 1,000 horse and infantry from the South arrived at Webster on their way to Grafton. From

Staunton, May 5, 1861, Harman wrote Gov. Letcher that by direction of Gen. Lee he would that day start arms, etc., intended for the Northwest, under escort of Capt. F. F. Sterret's company of cavalry; that he had also ordered Capt. Felix H. Hull, then at Staunton, to proceed at once to Highland to gather 200 men, including his company, to accompany Capt. Sterrett's command; that Capt. Moorman, of Pendleton, was also to join with 200 men; that Capts. Stover and McNeil, of Pocahontas, each with 150 men, if possible, were to repair to Huttonsville—all to unite their commands under Capt. Sterrett and proceed to Beverly. "My aim," said Harman, "is that the expedition shall reach its destination (Grafton, if thought proper) at least by the day of election:" which was May 23rd, the day these troops arrived at Webster. A letter from Gen. Lee to Col. Porterfield, dated May 24th, reads: "By this time the companies from Staunton must have reached you, and also one from Harper's Ferry; and I hope the true men of your region have been encouraged to go into the service of the State."

Gen. Johnson, commanding at Harper's Ferry, sent to the Adjutant General at Richmond July 1st an anonymous letter written from Martinsburg, stating that, according to the best information to be obtained there, Col. Porterfield left Grafton the previous Monday "with his command of about 1,500 men, and went to Philippi, where he probably awaited reinforcements from the Valley." The writer reported the arrival of United States troops at Mannington, said nothing definite was known about the troops advancing from Parkersburg, but that some of the railroad bridges on that line also it was believed had been

destroyed. There had been no military force of either side at Grafton the previous Wednesday at 4:00 p. m., but some of the Union men of the neighborhood were gathering together with such arms as they could get at home. The writer added that the bridges between Martinsburg and Cumberland should be burned (especially the bridge over the Potomac proper). "Small bridges," he said, "are but a small hindrance in point of time to an army; and recollect, the railroad is to be the means of precipitating the immense body of men from Ohio and west of Ohio who are to occupy our Virginia. Only important bridges will present obstacles, as to time, of any material value. West of Martinsburg there are important bridges, but I fear they are in the hands of Union men and a little force would be required."

Whatever Col. Porterfield's force may have been, it would seem the "true men" of that locality, invoked by Gen. Lee, did not contribute much to it. The only report of any accessions from such sources relates to the "six or seven raw recruits" which Col. Heck reported as joining Col. Turk at Fetterman.

## THE SURPRISE AND CAPTURE OF PHILIPPI.

### The Junction of Kelley and Morris at Grafton—The Strategic Advance and Rout.

#### MCCLELLAN'S REPORT TO GEN. SCOTT.

Gen. McClellan, from Cincinnati, June 1st, wired Adj. Gen. Townsend:

"Learning that the rebels who abandoned Grafton were this morning at Philippi, I have ordered an advance on that point in two columns from Grafton and Clarksburg, with instructions to drive them beyond Beverly and hold the latter place.

"I propose also to advance on Elizabeth and Weston in order to encourage the Union sentiment and to induce the Kanawha people to take a more decided course. I think they are not yet fully up to the mark and need careful nursing.

"By driving the rebels beyond Beverly, I think we shall free almost the whole of Western Virginia from their influence.

"I have already informed you that I have placed the operations in Western Virginia under Brig. Gen. Thomas A. Morris, of the Indiana volunteers, a graduate of West Point, and a cool, deliberate man."

Same date, McClellan to Townsend:

"Road from Parkersburg to Grafton open. Move on Philippi and Beverly tonight to drive the rebels entirely over the mountains.

"Kanawha movement suspended for the present in consequence of conference with Union men. I explain by mail."

#### GEN. MORRIS' REPORT TO MCCLELLAN.

Col. Kelley's command, arriving at Grafton May 30th, was joined in the evening of June 1st by the forces under Gen. Morris via Parkersburg Branch,



being six companies of his own regiment and nine of the Ninth Indiana. Under the latter date, Gen. McClellan had wired Adj. Gen. Townsend that an advance on Philippi would be made that night; but upon conference between Morris and Kelley, it was agreed to defer it until the following night. The story of the advance, the surprise of Porterfield's camp, the rout of his forces and the wounding of Col. Kelley are told in Gen. Morris' report, supplemented by a letter written recently by Capt. Thomas H. Norton, of Wheeling (since dead).

To mislead the numerous spies, Gen. Morris gave an order to Col. Kelley, June 2nd, to take six companies of his own regiment, nine of Milroy's and six of Irvine's Sixteenth Ohio and proceed on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad to a point about six miles east from Grafton, and thence march by the shortest and most practicable route to Philippi, regulating march and bivouac so as to be sure of coming before Philippi as near four o'clock in the morning as possible. "But should you this evening" (the order read) "receive certain information that the Rebels have retreated eastward from Philippi, you will follow them with all the speed the strength of your troops will allow. In such case, as early as possible, inform Col. Dumont, on the other bank of the river, and direct his co-operation in the pursuit, to continue, in your discretion, till they are beyond Beverly."

This column moved eastward by railroad train on the 2nd at 9:00 a. m., and was generally understood to be an advance on Harper's Ferry. After leaving the cars as directed, the distance to Philippi was about twenty-five miles on a road but little traveled.

The instructions required a rapid march during the day and early part of the night, to a point from which, after a sufficient rest, Philippi could be certainly reached by four o'clock next morning.

Capt. Thomas H. Norton, of Wheeling, a lieutenant in Col. Kelley's command, narrates in the Wheeling Intelligencer of August 10, 1906, following incidents in this connection:

"About midnight a terrific rainstorm interrupted the march and the command was halted for a few hours, and I remember seeking shelter under a wagon from the downpour until I was called upon to take charge of a prisoner in the person of a backwoods farmer who lived in the vicinity, and to whom Capt. Fordyce represented that we were a detachment of Confederate troops sent from Harper's Ferry to reinforce Porterfield. Acting under this supposition the man consented to guide our column to the point it was desired to reach, but we soon undeceived him as to the identity of our troops, and under a threat of instant death compelled him to accompany us and show us the way. Either from accident or design, the command was guided in a direction that brought us a mile or more on the flank of Porterfield's encampment at Philippi, and when the head of the column reached the apex of the hill that gave us a view of the town and the camp of the enemy, we were startled by an artillery fire from the heights on the opposite side of the river, which we first supposed was a Confederate battery opening fire on us; but a few moments disclosed it to be attached to the brigade of Ohio and Indiana troops that were co-operating in the movement from the direction of Webster. This fact cheered our men and the companies though wearied with the long march double quicked down the road, and were the first to enter the main street of the town, along which the enemy were retreating in hot haste.

\*   \*   \*   \*

"I remember that I had the pleasure of assisting to eat the very excellent breakfast prepared for Col. Porterfield, which

we found steaming hot in his quarters at Philippi after the so-called battle was over, and in rummaging about the adjutant's office in the same building we captured a lot of official documents. Among them was a letter from Governor Letcher, of Virginia, recommending the Colonel to run down to Wheeling some day, and capture the arms recently sent there by the Secretary of War, and if attacked by Ohio or Pennsylvania troops to retreat along the line of the B. & O. R. R., burning the bridges to prevent pursuit. I sent the original or a copy of this letter to the *Intelligencer* and it was published together with a description of the affair at Philippi."

Col. Dumont, commanding the Seventh Indiana regiment, was directed to proceed at 8:30 p. m. on the 2nd, to Webster, three miles west of Grafton, where he was joined by Col. Steedman, with five companies and two fieldpieces; also by Col. Crittenden, with six companies of his regiment. From Webster this column was to march on Philippi, distant about seventeen miles, arriving there at four o'clock precisely next morning. This column was to divert the attention of the enemy until the attack was made by Col. Kelley. When joined by Kelley, the whole force was to be under his command. This force leaving Grafton after dark, had reasonable assurance of reaching the enemy in advance of any information from their friends, as the event proved. Gen. Morris' report states that:

"The march through the storm and darkness was very severe. The last five miles made by Dumont's column was covered in seventy-five minutes. Many of the men fainted and were left on the road. Others threw away their haversacks and provisions to keep up."

The arrival of the two columns was but fifteen minutes apart. A reconnoissance in advance of Dumont's column was made by Col. F. W. Lander, who had the

immediate direction of the artillery. After the bridge over the Tygart's Valley was taken, "he pressed forward and joined Col. Kelley, rode into the enemy's ranks and captured the person reported to have shot Col. Kelley. He had great difficulty in restraining the Virginia volunteers from summarily despatching the man, who is a noted secessionist and a quartermaster of the Rebel forces."\*

Gen. Morris' report says there was much difficulty in getting an accurate statement of the Rebel loss;

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\*In answer to an inquiry by the writer touching the identity of this person, Col. Porterfield wrote under date of March 6, 1905: "Capt. Jordan was the quartermaster. I had heard the report that he had shot Col. Kelley, but never put confidence in it. I thought he had said so for notoriety. I do not think any one knew who wounded Col. Kelley."

Capt. Norton, in the letter already quoted from, makes the following statement regarding the shooting of Col. Kelley:

"Col. Kelley was undoubtedly shot—and at the time was supposed mortally wounded—by a Confederate quartermaster named Simms. We had not proceeded half way through the village before my attention was called by some of the men to the fact that Col. Kelley had been shot and fallen from his horse. Turning about I saw a number of soldiers surrounding a burly man on the side of the road who held in his hand an old-fashioned horse-pistol. They were saying, 'This is the man who shot our Colonel!' and were about to put him to death with their bayonets; but just at that moment a mounted officer rushed into the crowd of excited soldiers and rescued the imperiled Confederate. Our men cried out: 'Who are you?' and he replied: 'Col. Lander, your commander. This man is a prisoner of war, and to kill him is murder. Go after the enemy.'

"Our men then seemed pacified, but took charge of the prisoner. Some of the men then assisted Col. Kelley into a house opposite to where he was shot, and he was laid on a mattress on the floor; where, after the fray was over, it was ascertained that his wound was not necessarily mortal, and in a few days, Dr. Frissell, of Wheeling—who was then regarded as the most accomplished surgeon in our State—was sent for, and he soon pronounced the Colonel out of danger. In a few weeks Col. Kelley was well enough to be removed to Wheeling, and I was detailed with a platoon of soldiers to escort him to the city, and finally carried him in a carriage to the home of his father-in-law, Mr. William S. Goshorn, who lived out the Pike in Pleasant Valley, where in a month or two he fully recovered.

"Simms was removed to Grafton and held there as a prisoner for some time in a room at the hotel; and several times, when off duty, I engaged him in conversation, but never could induce him to admit that he fired the shot that wounded Col. Kelley."

that their killed were estimated at from fifteen to forty, and were supposed to have been carried off by friends during the confusion incident to the pursuit.

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June 3rd, Gen. McClellan wired Townsend, transmitting following telegram from Gen. Morris, in command at Grafton:

"We surprised the rebels, about 2,000 strong, at Philippi this morning. Captured a large amount of arms, horses, ammunition, provisions and camp equipage. The attack was made after a march during the entire night in a drenching rain. The surprise was complete. Fifteen rebels killed. The gallant Col. Kelley, of the First Virginia volunteers, is, I fear, mortally wounded. No other important casualties on our side."

Gen. McClellan reported to Townsend June 10th, regarding the rout of the enemy at Philippi, that he had learned they had received very considerable accessions to their numbers. "To prevent further outrages upon the railroads," he said, "I directed an immediate movement to dislodge and disperse them. This was executed under the orders of Gen. Morris, Col. Kelley of the First Virginia volunteers having the immediate command of the attacking columns."

Gen. McClellan compliments Col. Kelley highly and recommends his appointment as a brigadier. He also commends Col. Dumont and Col. Lander of the Indiana troops.

#### CONFEDERATE ACCOUNTS.

Maj. M. G. Harman, Col. J. M. Heck and Maj. R. E. Cowen despatched from Staunton to Richmond, June 6th:

"Messrs. Spalding and Cook have just reached here, leaving Philippi Monday morning. The Federal troops surprised Col. Porterfield's command, opening fire upon the town with artillery, and drove us out, with a reported loss of about six killed and a considerable quantity of arms, baggage and provisions. Much heavier loss to the enemy in men. McClellan led the Federal forces. Our forces retreated to Beverly.

"An expedition under Col. Heck leaves here Friday for the Northwest. We urge you will send by express train 2,000 men with arms and ammunition, to drive the vandals out, or else give up our border. These gentlemen were in the engagement; say Col. Porterfield had but little ammunition of any kind. Send an officer of experience to command our forces, with a battery and 5,000 arms if possible."

Same date Maj. Harman wrote Gen. Lee, as follows, enclosing a letter he had written to Col. Porterfield at Beverly:

"From all the information I have received, I am pained to have to express my conviction that Col. Porterfield is entirely unequal to the position which he occupies. The affair at Philippi was a disgraceful surprise, occurring about daylight, there being no picket guard, or guard of any kind, on duty. The only wonder is that our men were not cut to pieces. They were all asleep, and were only aroused by the firing of the enemy."

In Harman's letter to Porterfield, referred to in the foregoing, he states that he had received a telegram from Gen. Lee, saying: "Send a messenger to Col. Porterfield to be valiant and maintain his ground until relief reaches him."

Col. Porterfield, from Huttonsville, June 9th, wrote Adj. Gen. Garnett, regarding the state of his command:

"I have not been able to get even proper returns made out to send to your headquarters, and my own reputation has

been injured by the character of my command. In fact, if it had been intended to sacrifice me I could not have expected less support than I have had."

He adds:

"I have been reliably informed that two companies of negroes, armed and uniformed, have been seen at Fairmont. The country to the northwest is in a state of revolution, all law-abiding citizens being driven off by the traitors, assisted by northern troops. The private property of Secessionists, but otherwise inoffensive citizens, and their cattle, young, unbroken colts, and the clothing of women and children, have been seized and taken off from citizens of Philippi."

In a letter to Adj. Gen. Garnett, June 11th, Col. Porterfield says Col. William L. Jackson had reported to him for duty.

"He has been very active and will become a most useful officer. Col. Willey, who has also been very zealous and useful, was left sick in Philippi. I have assurance that he shall be well treated."

Col. Willey's usefulness consisted in his services in burning the bridges between Mannington and Farmington.

#### PHILIPPI COURT OF INQUIRY.

A court of inquiry into the responsibility for the disaster at Philippi was constituted at request of Col. Porterfield. Their report was submitted July 4th. The summary of the testimony shows conditions existing prior to the attack of Kelley and Dumont, June 3rd:

"The Court reported that the force at Philippi had consisted of 600 effective infantry and 175 cavalry, Virginia troops, sufficiently well armed but badly and insufficiently sup-

plied with accoutrements and ammunition. They were taken by surprise between daybreak and sunrise on the morning of June 3rd, no alarm or intimation of their approach having been given by the pickets until the enemy was within four or five hundred yards and had opened artillery fire.

“The investigations of the commission had developed that a main and picket guard as strong as was consistent with the effective infantry force present, was regularly detailed and posted at distances sufficiently far out to accomplish the object in view, provided they knew and did their duty, which latter is strongly to be suspected from the fact that although in advance they failed to give any intimation of the enemy’s approach, a conclusion which is strengthened by the official report of the mounted officers out with the scouting parties on the night of June 2nd that they had neither seen an infantry picket nor been challenged by its sentinels going from or returning to the town that night.

“It appears that immediately upon the arrival of the command at Philippi, the officer in command, Col. Porterfield, took measures to place his force, which was raw and new in service, under a course of instruction, and to select those, in his opinion, best fitted to instruct the sentinels and guards in their duties. The testimony shows that while there was a certain degree of confusion in some quarters, a portion of the command moved from the town in good order, and that the whole force, nearly, after passing some distance from the town, was reformed and proceeded in order.

“It is shown in the evidence that an expectation of attack or movement upon Philippi shortly to be made was entertained generally among the officers and others of the command and that intelligence (how well founded is not known) was brought from time to time of the strength and supposed intent of the enemy; that this had so far produced its effect as to induce the officer in command to call a meeting of his officers; that the result of their consultations and deliberations was an almost if not unanimous decision in favor of immediate retreat; that when Col. Porterfield returned to the room (from which he had been absent a short time) their opinion was conveyed to him, to which he seemed loth to accede, yet de-



terminated to make a further examination of the munitions on hand and to prepare the baggage and train for removal at a moment's notice. No orders to march at any particular time were given, so far as can be gathered from the testimony, although it appears that an understanding or impression was had or entertained by some that the movement would not take place until morning, while some believed it contingent on the weather.

"The record will disclose the fact of a difference of construction (as to the hour of the return) of the orders given to the officer in command of the cavalry company from which the scouting party or parties was taken for duty on the night of the 2nd June.

"The testimony of several witnesses bears evidence of the cool, deliberate and self-possessed conduct of Col. Porterfield on the morning of June 3rd."

In reviewing the proceedings of the court, Gen. Lee remarks that:

"The position at Philippi was seriously threatened by a superior force of the enemy, distant only four hours' march; that Col. Porterfield was aware of the danger of his position and prudently prepared to vacate it. His desire to prevent the occupation of the town by the enemy was worthy of all praise, and had he promptly sent back his baggage and ineffective men and arranged his plan of defense and taken proper measures to secure information of the advance of the enemy, he might safely have retained his position and either given battle or retired, as circumstances might dictate. It does not appear from the record of the court that any plan of defense was formed; but it does appear that the troops retired without his orders, and that the instructions to the advance guard were either misconceived or not executed. To these circumstances must be attributed the disaster that followed, and they call for heavy censure of all concerned.

"The commanding General remarks with pleasure upon the coolness, self-possession, courage and energy displayed by Col. Porterfield at the moment of attack; but he cannot exonerate

him from blame in not taking proper precautionary measures beforehand. Yet, in consideration of all the circumstances, he does not think it necessary to do more than express the opinion of the court in the hope that the sad effect produced by the want of forethought and vigilance as exhibited in this case will be a lesson to be remembered by the army throughout the war."

## LEE SENDS GARNETT TO MEET THE UNION ADVANCE.

### DISPOSITIONS AND PLANS OF THE NEW COMMANDER.

June 13th, Gen. Lee advised Col. Porterfield that Gen. Robert S. Garnett, Adjt. Gen. of the P. A. N. Va., had been sent to take command in the Northwest. June 16th, Gen. Garnett reported to his successor, Adjt. Gen. Cooper, that his command had occupied the mountain pass at Laurel Hill, twelve miles north of Beverly, and the pass in the Rich Mountain on the turnpike leading from Beverly to Buckhannon, at a point about seven miles west of Beverly.

June 18th, Gen. Garnett wrote to Cooper, complaining of the condition of his command and insufficiency of supplies.

He wrote on the 20th that the enemy was reported 6,000 strong at Philippi and 4,000 in Grafton, with six pieces of artillery at Philippi. His own opinion was there were not more than 7,000 men at both places.

He explained his reasons for seizing the two passes named. He had heard the enemy were moving from Philippi to Buckhannon and made a forced march by night to take possession of these passes before they could be occupied by the enemy, both being necessary to check an advance on Beverly from either direction. He presumed it was the object of the enemy to seize the two passes and thus shut his forces in the valley of Beverly, Huttonsville, etc. But he now doubted if anything could be done with the Laurel Hill pass. It was not so formidable as he

had been led to suppose, and would present no difficulty to good light infantry.

From Laurel Hill, June 25th, Gen. Garnett reported to Adj. Gen. Cooper, more in detail, the condition and surroundings of his command and the strategic advantages and disadvantages of his situation. He said that he had reached Huttonsville on the 14th and found twenty-three companies of infantry, mostly mustered in, but "in miserable condition as to arms, clothing, equipments, instruction and discipline." Twenty of these were organized into two regiments, one under Lieut. Col. W. L. Jackson, and the other under Lieut. Col. J. M. Heck. These two regiments were at once marched to Rich Mountain pass and to Laurel Hill. Though the force was "wholly incapable" of rendering anything like efficient service, he deemed it so important to possess the two turnpike passes over Rich Mountain and Laurel Hill before they should be seized by the enemy, that he left Huttonsville on the evening of the 15th with the two regiments he had organized there and Capt. Rice's battery, and by marching them the greater part of the night, reached the two passes early in the afternoon of the following day. "I regard these two passes," says Gen. Garnett, "as the gates to the Northwestern country, and had they been occupied by the enemy, my command would have been effectually paralyzed or shut in the Cheat River valley. It was a great mistake on the part of the enemy not to have remained here after driving Col. Porterfield's command over it."

Gen. Garnett said he had blocked all the country roads leading from the northwestern country which

“cross this range of mountains between the foot of Cheat Mountain and St. George;” he was now endeavoring to collect grain and cattle from the direction of Philippi and Buckhannon, and expected to make a depot at the foot of Cheat Mountain six miles south of Huttonsville. He regarded his force sufficient to hold these passes, but not sufficient to hold the railroad. He remarks that the road from St. George to Cheat River bridge, near Rowlesburg, by which he could approach the railroad, is blocked. He thinks his best chance of getting to the railroad would be by the Morgantown road from Evansville. From that point, he could equally menace Grafton, twelve miles distant, and Cheat bridge, fourteen miles distant; at each of which points the Union army had a force. They would be obliged to keep their forces at these points, which would enable him to get at the road at Independence, five miles from Evansville, destroy it there and then fall upon the force at Cheat River bridge (by marching along the railroad), before it could be reinforced from Grafton. The objection to this plan was that the enemy at Philippi could throw himself on Garnett’s rear. If he had sufficient force to hold Laurel Hill securely, his remaining force could regain it from Cheat bridge via St. George, with a little work on that road, the roads from Philippi (four in number) being blocked by Garnett. His “moving force”—say 3,000—would not be sufficient, he feared, for this operation.

Two companies of infantry were being organized at Beverly under Col. Porterfield, who had been assigned temporarily to the command of that place.

“The mass of the country people,” said Gen. Garnett, “is against us.”

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Gen. Lee, in his acknowledgment of this report, says:

“The rupture of the railroad at Cheat River would be worth to us an army.”

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July 1st, Gen. Garnett wrote again, asking for additional force:

“With the railroad running across my entire front, I have become satisfied I cannot operate my present position with any reasonable expectation of substantial success with the present force under my command. My hopes for increase of my force in this region have been sadly disappointed. Only eight men have joined me here and fifteen at Col. Heck's camp. These people are thoroughly imbued with an ignorant and bigoted Union sentiment.

“Unless I am misinformed as to the state of feeling among the people and the condition of things in the Kanawha valley, it is my opinion that Gen. Wise's command could be of more service to the cause by operating in the direction of Parkersburg and the Northwestern Railroad. It would produce a very effective diversion in favor of the operations from this point.”

In a letter dated July 6th, Gen. Garnett refers to this again:

“Some subsequent information has confirmed me in my convictions as to the propriety of such a movement. I learned a day or two since from sources in my front that 2,800 men who had been put upon light-draft steamers in Pittsburg to operate in the Kanawha valley were diverted from that purpose and landed at Parkersburg; from which place they came to Clarksburg, and thence to Buckhannon; where, with

others from Philippi to the number of 3,000 to 4,000, they have taken up their position with supporting forces at Weston and Clarksburg, numbers unknown."

Gen. Garnett did not favor a direct move on Parkersburg, because that, instead of taking the troops away from his front, would simply bring in more troops from beyond the Ohio; but if Wise were to retrace his steps from Charleston to Summersville in Nicholas county, and go thence to Bulltown in Braxton county—"both of which counties are loyal to our cause—he would be within a day's march of Weston and threaten both it and Buckhannon; and the enemy would have to draw from his force in my front to meet him. The valley of the Kanawha is comparatively loyal to our cause, and the force under Floyd would be abundant to meet any force which it is probable the enemy will send into that region for the present."

Garnett suggested that the enemy could at all times maintain superiority of numbers in his vicinity, and it was a question for the government to decide "whether the mere paralyzation of a superior force of the enemy, with the hope of seizing the railroad if an opportunity should offer, is a sufficient object to warrant the maintenance of our forces in this region. I have," he adds, "by no means relinquished or abated my hope of being able on some favorable occasion to get at the road. But this is a contingency."

#### DIVERSION BY WISE.

To Gen. Garnett's suggestion of a diversion which might be made by Gen. Wise, Gen. Lee replied July

11th, and same date wrote to Wise in regard to it. To the latter, he said:

“Gen. Garnett thinks one of the most effective means of keeping the Kanawha valley free is to give Gen. McClellan full occupation where he now is. He thinks if your column should move from Charleston direct upon Parkersburg it would merely have the effect of bringing further reinforcements from Ohio; but if it were to march from Summersville, in Nicholas county, to Bulltown, in Braxton, both of which are loyal to our cause, it would be within a few days' march of Weston and would threaten both it and Buckhannon, and that the enemy would thus be divided and might be struck at in detail. Communication with Gen. Garnett can be had by way of Huttonsville. He estimates the enemy's force at 6,000 men; at Grafton a few hundred; at Clarksburg about 3,000; at Weston 2,000, and at Cheat River bridge from 2,000 to 3,000—making a total of about 17,000 men.”

In reply to this suggestion, Gen. Wise wrote Gen. Lee from Charleston, July 17th:

“Gen. Garnett was mistaken in his anticipations about the enemy not invading the Kanawha valley and in his apprehension of my moving from Charleston direct upon Parkersburg. We are now on both sides of the Kanawha as high as the mouth of Coal River, front to front to the foe. \* \* \* At Coal, I have posted 900 efficient men; at Two-Mile and Elk, say, 800 efficient, and at Gauley Bridge, Summersville and the Old Mill, on the Birch river, in all 1,000, with instructions to scout towards Suttonville, where the enemy are already in possession. I have anticipated Gen. Garnett, you see, in this movement. I cannot reinforce him, but he may me, by the road leading from Huttonsville up Tygart's valley road to Rackstone, up that fork to where it crosses the range of Rich Mountain; thence between Grassy Creek and Back Fork of Elk to where it crosses Elk; thence southwest to the head of Laurel creek; thence to the head of Big Birch river and down the same to the Old Mill near there at the gorge of Birch mountain, in my outpost from Summersville. If Gen. Floyd



can reinforce Coal river and Gen. Garnett can, in considerable number, reinforce Birch and Elk, I will make a diversion that shall distract and defeat the enemy."

#### CHEAT RIVER VIADUCT.

June 22nd, Jefferson Davis wrote to Gen. Johnson, commanding at Harper's Ferry, suggesting that "if the bridge at Cheat River and the Grand (Kingwood) tunnel could be destroyed so as to prevent the use of the railroad for the duration of the war, the effect upon public opinion in West Virginia would doubtless be of immediate and great advantage to our cause."

From Grafton, June 23rd, Gen. McClellan reported to Adj. Gen. Townsend that he had information which made it probable there were from 1,500 to 3,000 Rebels at Romney, entrenched with a few guns. He thought their object was to cover the approach to Winchester, and to serve as a base for guerrilla parties operating towards Piedmont.

## THE UNION ADVANCE ON RICH MOUNTAIN.

### GEN. MCCLELLAN'S PLANS.

From Parkersburg, June 22nd, Gen. McClellan wired Adjt. Gen. Townsend that he was on the point of moving forward to Clarksburg, to advance thence "either on the rear of the enemy at Beverly or to go on to Piedmont."

From Grafton, June 23rd, McClellan wired Townsend:

"I did not find my orders intelligently carried out for the advance on Cheat River, and will go there myself tomorrow to see it properly attended to. It is very important to secure that line.

"There is certainly a strong force of some kind near Huttonsville, with a strong advanced party entrenched near Laurel Mountain, between Philippi and Beverly."

As soon as he could get his command well in hand, the General proposed moving with his available force from Clarksburg to Buckhannon, "then on Beverly, to turn entirely the detachment at Laurel Mountain," the troops at Philippi to be advanced in time to follow up the retreat of the Rebels in their front. "After occupying Beverly," he said, "I shall move on Huttonsville and endeavor to drive them into the mountains, whither I do not propose to follow them unless under such circumstances as to make success certain.

"As soon as practicable, I intend to clear out the Valley of the Kanawha."

## McCLELLAN PROCLAIMS.

June 23rd, a proclamation was issued by Gen. McClellan from Grafton, "To the Inhabitants of Western Virginia," warning them against engaging in guerrilla warfare; and another, "To the Soldiers of the Army of the West," concluding with these words: "Soldiers, I have heard that there was danger here. I have come to place myself at your head and share it with you. I fear now but one thing—that you will not find foemen worthy of your steel."

## REBUKES GEN. MORRIS.

Somewhat in line with this vainglorious pronouncement was a rebuke given by McClellan to Gen. Morris in a letter to him a fortnight later. While at Buckhannon, Gen. McClellan received a letter by messenger from Gen. Morris, then in command at Philippi with a force of three to four thousand confronting Garnett at Laurel Hill, written to acquaint his superior with the situation there. Gen. Morris' letter does not appear with Gen. McClellan's reply, but the reply, dated July 3rd, indicates that Morris had expressed apprehension of attack by Gen. Garnett and fear that the defense of Philippi was not sufficiently assured with the force at his command. Gen. McClellan's reply expresses surprise that Morris should feel any apprehension and rebukes him rather harshly for timidity, adding, however, that he had ordered the Sixth Ohio, Col. Latham's company, and such of Keys' cavalry as were fit for service, to reinforce him.

"Do not ask for any further reinforcements," said McClellan. "If you do, I shall take it as a request

to be relieved from your command and return to Indiana. I have spoken plainly. I speak officially. \* \* \* I must have generals under me who are willing to take as much risk as I am. I propose taking the really difficult and dangerous part of this work on my own hands." We shall see how McClellan did this at Rich Mountain.

July 6th, from Buckhannon, A. A. Gen. Williams sent a letter to Gen. Morris, directing him to move next morning to a position within two miles of Garnett's army, which is particularly described as being "near Eliot's farm, in preference on the south side of Barker's Mill Run, on the heights in the rear of William Yeager's house." He said it was "preferable to avoid the defile north of the Eliot house by crossing the river somewhere near the nineteenth milepost from Beverly and recrossing at the ford where the Middle Fork road crosses, just at the position to be occupied." Morris was directed to occupy Belington by a strong advanced guard, also to cover the paths leading from the rebel camp to his left. It was added that he was to do all in his power to hold Garnett in check in the present position and to induce the enemy to believe Morris was to make the main attack, "the object being to cut them off at Beverly."

The reference in this letter to "the nineteenth milepost from Beverly," just at the position Morris was directed to take, "within two miles of the enemy," indicates that the distance from Beverly to Garnett's position was seventeen miles, contrary to the opinion expressed in Col. Porterfield's letter that it did not exceed twelve.

## MCCLELLAN'S RESOURCES AND PLANS.

July 5th, Gen. McClellan wrote Adj. Gen. Townsend from Buckhannon:

"You will observe that this is the most strategical position in this region. From it I can cover our base of operations and supplies and move readily by good roads in any desired direction.

"Have directed the positions on Cheat River, Grafton, Webster, Clarksburg and Parkersburg to be entrenched. The bridges and tunnels of the two branches of the road are now well guarded. The Cheat River, covering the left of our base, is guarded by eleven companies; Grafton, by a regiment; Clarksburg, by some eight companies, besides Virginia recruits; Parkersburg six companies, two regiments of Indiana troops to arrive there today and to be disposable as a reserve when needed. ——— companies occupy Wirt C. H. Four companies at Ravenswood repulsed O. J. Wise night before last.

"In consequence of the threatening aspect of affairs in the Great Kanawha valley, I have ordered four regiments there.

"Our troops composing the active army are at Philippi, amusing the enemy, who is strongly entrenched with artillery on Laurel Mountain, between that place and Beverly. I have with me here six entire regiments of infantry, six detached companies, two batteries, two companies of cavalry. Two more regiments and some five or six detached companies of infantry will reach here by tomorrow night.

"The Seventh Ohio occupied Weston three days since, and four companies of the Seventeenth reached Glenville from Parkersburg yesterday. I ordered strong detachments of these companies to move last night on Bulltown, to break up a large force of armed rebels congregating there.

"I expect to find the enemy in strong position on Rich Mountain just this side of Beverly. I shall, if possible, turn the position to the south and then occupy the Beverly road in his rear. \* \* \* From all I learn the enemy is still uncertain where the main attack is to be made, and is committing

the error of dividing his army in the face of superior forces. If he abandons the position of Laurel Mountain, the troops at Philippi will press him closely. I shall know tonight with certainty what he has in the pass at Huttonsville."

Next day McClellan despatched Townsend:

"By the 8th or 9th, at latest, I expect to occupy Beverly, fighting a battle in the meanwhile. I propose to drive the enemy over the mountains towards Staunton, and expect your further orders by telegraph whether to move on Staunton or towards Wytheville."

Same date McClellan to Townsend:

"I expect to attack the enemy on the 8th or 9th. He is entrenched on Rich Mountain. Have ordered Morris to move in the morning his command (sixty-two companies and one battery) to within one and a half miles of Laurel Mountain, where the enemy is strongly entrenched."

To the first telegram, Townsend replied:

"When you speak of extending your operations to Staunton, and even to Wytheville, the General fears your line will be too long without intermediate supports. He wishes you to weigh well these points before deciding."

July 10th, from Middle Fork bridge, McClellan wired Townsend:

"In sight of the enemy, who is strongly entrenched. I think I can turn his position. My other column from Philippi is within a mile of the entrenchments on Laurel Hill; advanced guards within two hundred yards of the enemy on each line. Shall make no further extended movement without laying the whole case before the General and obtaining his orders in advance."

## THE ACTION AT RICH MOUNTAIN.

### FEDERAL REPORTS.

When the last foregoing despatch was written, Gen. McClellan, with the main body of his army, was at Roaring creek, a tributary of the Middle Fork river, where he confronted the force under Col. Pegram, entrenched near the west base of Rich Mountain, on the Beverly and Buckhannon turnpike.

What followed is related in several reports, as follows:

The official reports of Gen. McClellan to the War Department at Washington;

Report of Gen. Rosecrans, second in command, to Gen. McClellan;

Testimony of Gen. Rosecrans before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, at Washington, in 1865.

### MCCELLELLAN'S REPORTS OF PROGRESS.

Following wires were sent by Gen. McClellan to Townsend, prior to writing his official report:

From the top of Rich Mountain, 9:00 a. m., July 12th:

"We are in possession of all the enemy's works up to a point in sight of Beverly. \* \* \* Rosecrans' column left camp yesterday morning and marched some eight miles through the mountains, reaching the turnpike some two or three miles in the rear of the enemy, driving out a defensive force and taking a couple of guns. I had position ready for twelve guns near main camp, and as guns were moving up ascertained that the enemy had retreated. Am now pushing on to Beverly and part of Rosecrans' troops are within three miles of it."

From Beverly, July 12th, 8:00 p. m.:

"I turned the enemy's very strong entrenchments on Rich Mountain yesterday with Gen. Rosecrans' brigade and one company of cavalry. Had a spirited action with a large party of the enemy, who had two guns on the summit of the mountain. Captured both guns and killed a large number of the enemy. This morning as we were in the act of moving twelve guns into position to command the enemy's entrenchments by a road cut last evening, it was ascertained that he had left in the utmost confusion. I advanced on Beverly and occupied it with the least possible delay, thus cutting off Garnett's retreat on Huttonsville and forcing him to take the Leadsville and Saint George road. Captured official papers show Garnett's forces to have been ten thousand men. Have ordered Gen. Morris to press him closely, and have given instructions by telegraph which will throw 5,000 to 6,000 men and four guns in his front, so that there is good reason to hope we may yet capture him.

"I shall move on Huttonsville tomorrow morning and endeavor to seize Cheat Mountain pass before the enemy can occupy it in strength. With that pass seized, the position on Cheat River strongly occupied, and Gauley Bridge held, as it is probably by this time by Gen. Cox, I think we shall have placed the occupation of Western Virginia on a safe basis."

From Beverly, July 13th:

"Garnett abandoned his camp early this morning. He came within a few miles of Beverly, but our rapid march turned him back in great confusion and he is now retreating on the road to Saint George. I have ordered Gen. Morris to follow him closely and have telegraphed for two Pennsylvania regiments at Cumberland to join Gen. Hill at Rowlesburg. The General is concentrating all his troops at Rowlesburg to cut off Garnett's retreat near West Union, or, if possible, Saint George."



## RICH MOUNTAIN.

McCLELLAN'S REPORT TO GEN. SCOTT.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF OCCUPATION, WESTERN VIRGINIA,

*Camp near Huttonsville, July 14, 1861.*

COLONEL: I have the honor to submit, for the information of the commanding general, the following report of the operations of the forces under my command from the time of my leaving Grafton:

Previous to my departure from Grafton I became satisfied that a large body of the rebel army (supposed to consist of six or seven thousand men, under Brigadier General Robert S. Garnett, formerly of the United States army) occupied an intrenched position at Laurel Hill, about thirteen miles south of Philippi, on the turnpike leading to Beverly, with the apparent intention of making a determined stand at that point. Whereupon I at once resolved to push on with all the available force at my disposal, and endeavor, by making a rapid detour through Buckhannon, to reach Beverly and strike their rear, cutting off their supply communication from Staunton.

As soon as I had concentrated my forces at Buckhannon, I moved forward, and at the same time ordered General Morris to advance from Philippi and take a commanding position about a mile and a half distant, and directly opposite the enemy's works, thereby enabling him to divert their attention from me, also to watch their movements and be in position to act promptly after I had reached their rear at Beverly.

General Morris promptly responded to my order and secured the proper position with but slight resistance, and I pushed forward with my column as rapidly as my means of transportation would permit.

On the evening of the 9th instant I arrived at Roaring creek, near the base of Rich Mountain, where I found the

enemy, in considerable force, had destroyed a bridge, and were strongly intrenched at a point where the road enters a defile leading up the mountain, about two miles distant from my camp. On the morning of the 10th I ordered a reconnaissance in force, consisting of the 9th and 4th Ohio volunteers and Loomis's battery, under the supervision of Lieutenant Poe, topographical engineers. This was pushed within two hundred yards of the enemy's guns, and resulted in the loss of one man killed and one wounded, but the dense thickets with which their works were surrounded prevented the attainment of much positive or satisfactory information. It served, however, to confirm my previous supposition that the intrenchments were held by a large force, with several guns in position to command the first approaches, and that a direct assault would result in a heavy and unnecessary loss of life. These considerations at once determined me to make an effort to turn their flank and commence the attack from the rear. Accordingly, I ordered General Rosecrans to move at 4 o'clock in the morning with the 19th Ohio, the 8th, 10th, and 13th Indiana regiments, and Burdsall's dragoons, to cut his way through the almost impenetrable thickets of brush to the lofty summit of Rich Mountain, at Hart's farm, about five miles distant, and to move thence at once down the turnpike road and attack the intrenchments in rear, and, during the progress of his march, to communicate with me every hour. The remainder of the force under my command to be held in readiness to assault in front as soon as Rosecrans' musketry should indicate that he was immediately in their rear. The order to General Rosecrans to attack the rear of the enemy's lower intrenchments was not carried out, but his brigade remained at Hart's farm during the remainder of the day and night, and I received no communication from him after about 11 o'clock a. m., when he was still distant about a mile and a half from Hart's farm.

About the time I expected the general to reach the rear of their intrenchments I moved up all my available force to the front and remained, in person, just in rear of the advance pickets, ready to assault when the indicated moment should arrive. In the meantime I sent Lieutenant Poe to

find such a position for our artillery as would enable us to command the works. Late in the afternoon I received his report that he had found such a place. I immediately detailed a party to cut a road to it for our guns, but it was too late to get them into position before dark, and, as I had received no intelligence whatever of General Rosecrans' movements, I finally determined to return to camp, leaving merely sufficient force to cover the working party. Orders were then given to move up ten guns with the entire available infantry at daybreak the following morning. As the troops were much fatigued, some delay occurred in moving from camp, and just as the guns were starting intelligence was received that the enemy had evacuated their works and fled over the mountains, leaving all their guns, means of transportation, ammunition, tents, and baggage behind. Then, for the first time since 11 o'clock the previous day, I received a communication from General Rosecrans giving me the first intimation that he had taken the enemy's position at Hart's farm, from which it appeared that he, with great difficulty, and almost superhuman efforts on the part of his men, had forced his way up the precipitous side of the mountain, and at about 1 p. m. reached the summit, where he encountered a portion of the enemy's forces, with two guns in position behind earth and log works, affording protection to their men.

The attack was commenced by the enemy with heroic spirit and determination. They opened upon the advance of our column with volleys of musketry and rapid discharges of canister, killing several of our men and at first throwing them into some confusion. They, however, soon rallied and returned a brisk and accurate fire, which told with terrible effect in the enemy's ranks, killing and wounding nearly every man at their guns. The troops then advanced, continuing their well-directed fire until they drove the enemy from their position and caused them to take flight down the turnpike towards their intrenchments at the base of the mountain.

The troops then encamped on the battle-field at about 2 o'clock p. m., and remained there until the following morning, when I made a rapid march and occupied Beverly. I

here learned that General Garnett, as soon as he discovered we were approaching his rear and had cut off his retreat in this direction, abandoned his intrenchments at Laurel Hill, leaving his tents and other property, and had made a hasty retreat in the night over a rough country road leading towards St. George. General Morris had been repeatedly instructed by me to keep a close watch upon Garnett's movements, and to be ready the moment he retreated to follow him up vigorously with all his available force and crush him if possible; but, much to my surprise, when he discovered that Garnett had escaped, he only sent a portion of his force about eight miles, and then halted it for several hours to communicate with me and bring up re-enforcements.

This detention gave Garnett the opportunity to get far in advance, and had it not been for the rapid and well-directed march of the advance conducted by Captain Benham, it is believed that the rebel general would have escaped unharmed. Captain Benham is entitled to great praise for his prompt and energetic movement upon Garnett's rear, the result of which will be seen from his report enclosed. This shows that General Garnett and about twenty others of the enemy were killed, and fifty prisoners, two stands of colors, and one rifled cannon taken, besides the baggage train and a large amount of other property. I take very great pleasure in recommending Captain Benham to the special notice of the general-in-chief.

Immediately after learning that Garnett had retreated, I ordered Brigadier General Hill (commanding at Grafton) to assemble all his disposable force and endeavor, by a rapid march upon Saint George or West Union, to cut off the retreat of the rebels; but I have not yet heard the result of his movement. My last advices this evening report General Hill's advance within four miles of the retreating rebels.

I have not time now to notice individual acts of merit and bravery displayed in the recent conflicts, but shall take an early opportunity of presenting them to you in detail. I cannot, however, let the present occasion pass without making mention of the services of Brigadier General Rosecrans in conducting his command up the very precipitous sides of the

mountains and overcoming the formidable obstacles which impeded his progress; also, for the very handsome manner in which he planned and directed his attack upon the rebels at Hart's farm, carrying them after a stout and determined resistance. I also consider it due to my volunteer aide-de-camp, Colonel F. W. Lander, to speak of his services in this connection. He (by the request of General Rosecrans) accompanied his column, and by his experience assisted materially in conducting the troops over a most difficult country, and displayed extraordinary activity and courage in the battle. He escaped unhurt, having the horse under him disabled by a canister shot.

I pursued the retreating rebels yesterday as far as Cheat River, and became satisfied that they would not stop short of Staunton. I therefore returned to this camp, which commands the communication between eastern and western Virginia over the Staunton and Parkersburg turnpike.

General Garnett's command, when last heard from, were retreating in great confusion near the north branch of the Potomac on the road leading from West Union to Williamsport.

I trust I will not be regarded as merely conforming to a formula when I express the great obligations due to my personal and general staff, who by their good judgment, untiring energy and cool conduct, have enabled me to overcome the inevitable difficulties of an imperfect and hasty organization, and to accomplish whatever good results have been achieved. As far as I have myself observed and learned from their officers, the conduct of the volunteers who participated in the actions at Rich Mountain and at Carrick's Ford was unexceptionable. They invariably displayed an ardent desire to meet the enemy, and great gallantry in action, and, in my judgment, all they require to make good and reliable soldiers is a little more drill and discipline.

The results of the action at Rich Mountain, as nearly as can be ascertained, were as follows: Our loss in killed, 12; wounded, 59; no prisoners. The loss of the enemy in killed, 135; wounded and prisoners (not yet reported,) as near as can be determined, between 800 and 900. Two brass 6-pounder

cannon, a large number of muskets, two stands of colors, and other property, were taken. Two 6-pounder brass cannon were captured at the lower intrenchments, with a large wagon train, with horses and a large number of tents. But the really important results of these operations are the complete rout and annihilation of the rebel forces, the capture of one and the death of the other of their leaders, that this portion of Western Virginia is entirely freed from their presence and that there is now not one single organized band of the rebels on this side of the mountain north of the Kanawha valley.

After my arrival at Beverly I received a note from Colonel Pegram, containing a proposition to surrender his command as prisoners of war. This note, with my reply, are enclosed. His command, consisting of 33 commissioned officers and 560 men, are now prisoners.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEORGE B. McCLELLAN, *Major General U. S. Army.*

Colonel E. D. TOWNSEND, A. A. G.,

## ROSECRANS' REPORT TO McCLELLAN.

*Headquarters of the Army, Washington, D. C.*

HEADQUARTERS 1ST BRIGADE U. S. VOLUNTEER MILITIA.

*Beverly, Virginia, July 19, 1861.*

MAJOR: In obedience to the order of the major general commanding, I have the honor to submit the following report of the operations of the 1st brigade, consisting of the 8th and 10th Indiana volunteer militia, the 13th Indiana U. S. volunteer infantry, and 19th Ohio U. S. volunteer militia, which resulted in dislodging the rebel forces from their intrenched position at camp Garnett on Rich Mountain.

After the armed reconnaissance was over, by direction of the major general I ordered the 8th Indiana to bivouac in advance of the camp at Roaring creek, and the 10th and 13th into camp.

About 10 p. m. I came to the headquarters with a plan for turning the enemy's position. The general, having considered it and heard the information on which it was based, was pleased to direct me to carry it out, and for that purpose ordered Colonel Sullivan, of the 13th Indiana, and Burdsall's cavalry, temporarily attached to the brigade, and that the movement should begin at daylight on the next morning.

The troops were ordered to parade in silence under arms, without knapsacks, with one day's rations in their haversacks and their canteens filled with water. By inadvertence the assembly was sounded in the 19th Ohio regiment and lights put in several tents, when I discovered it; but they were promptly extinguished.

The pickets relieved, the regimental camps and guards with the sick, and a few men of each company remaining, orders were given that the reveille should be beaten at the usual hour, and the column formed and moved forward in the following order and strength:

First. 8th Indiana, under Benton.....	242	strong
Second. 10th Indiana, under Manson	425	"
Third. 13th Indiana, under Sullivan..	650	"
Fourth. 19th Ohio, under Beatty.....	525	"
	<hr/>	
Total infantry.....	1,842	
Fifth. Burdsall's cavalry.....	75	
	<hr/>	
Aggregate .....	1,917	

Colonel Lander, accompanied by the guide, led the way through a pathless forest over rocks and ravines, keeping far down on the southeastern declivities of the mountain spurs and using no axe, to avoid discovery by the enemy, who we supposed would be on the alert by reason of the appearance of unusual stir in our camp and the lateness of the hour. A rain set in about 6 a. m. and lasted until about 11 o'clock a. m., with intermissions, during which the column pushed cautiously and steadily forward, and arrived at last and halted in rear of the crest on the top of Rich Mountain, hungry and weary with an eight-hours' march over a most unkindly road. They lay down to rest, while Colonel Lander and the general examined the country. It was found that the guide was too much scared to be with us longer, and we had another valley to cross, another hill to climb, another descent beyond that to make, before we could reach the Beverly road at the top of the mountain. On this road we started at 2 o'clock and reached the top of the mountain after the loss of an hour's time, by mistake in the direction of the head of the column, in rectifying which the 10th Indiana took the advance.

Shortly after passing over the crest of the hill, the head of the column, ordered to be covered by a company deployed as skirmishers, was fired on by the enemy's pickets, killing Sergt. James A. Taggart and dangerously wounding Capt. Christopher Miller, of the 10th. The column then advanced through dense brushwood, emerging into rather more open brushwood and trees, when the rebels opened a fire of both musketry and 6-pounders, firing some case shot and a few shells.



The 10th advanced and took position at A, Plan No. 1, with one company deployed as skirmishers covering its front. The 8th advanced and halted in column of fours at B. The 13th advanced to C, in an old road, where it was ordered to occupy the heights, with three companies at *d d d*, and skirmish down the hill, keeping strong reserves on the top; three companies were ordered back to E, to cover the debouch up the valley on the left; the companies of the remainder were to fill the space in the line marked | | | , the remaining two companies standing in column at . The 19th Ohio came down the road and halted in column at H.\*

Owing to misunderstanding orders, Colonel Sullivan occupied the hill with his whole regiment, and it took forty minutes to correct the error and get in the proper position as indicated. The command forward was then given, and another company from the right of the 10th deployed as skirmishers, leaving an interval through which the 8th could pass in column and charge the rebel battery on the left of their position at Z as soon as our fire had told properly. At the same time Colonel Sullivan was to take his four companies and charge around the road on the left. After an advance of fifty yards and some heavy firing from our line, the enemy showed signs of yielding, and I gave orders to the 8th and sent them to the colonel of the 13th, to charge in column. The 8th made a mistake and got into line at B, where, in consideration of their abundant supplies of ammunition, I left them.

The 13th went into column at D, Plan 2. Seven companies of the 19th Ohio deployed into line at H and delivered two splendid volleys, when the enemy broke. Meanwhile I rode round to the 13th and drove them in to charge up across the road, as shown at L. The 10th charged by fours at J. The 8th came down and charged upon the rebel front at K.

The battle was over, the enemy dispersed, one piece of cannon taken at A, another at B, and their dead and wounded scattered over the hill-side.

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\*Gen. Rosecrans' battle plans were not found by the compilers with his report.

Learning from a captive that the 44th Virginia and some Georgia troops and cavalry were below, and finding it too late to continue the operations against the rebels' position that evening with troops as much exhausted as were ours, and threatened, too, by succors, the troops were bivouacked in the position shown on Plan No. 2—Lieutenant Colonel Hollingsworth going down on the ridge with six companies to the position mentioned, within half a mile of the rebel pickets.

The two brass 6-pounders captured were put in order, and, under command of Captain Conckle, 19th Ohio, placed—one looking down the Beverly road at *C*, the other at *d*, looking towards camp Garnett.

During that rainy night our men bivouacked cheerfully, and turned out with great promptitude whenever the rebels by their movements alarmed our pickets. About 3 o'clock in the morning of the 12th our pickets brought in a prisoner from the rebel camp, from whom I learned their forces were disorganized and probably dispersing. This determined the dispositions for the attack on the camp. I ordered Colonel Beatty, with all the 19th, to proceed along the ridge and take their position on the south side of the road, and directed Burdsall's cavalry, accompanied by one company of the 10th Indiana, to reconnoitre down the road. Colonel Sullivan, with the 13th, was to follow the movement promptly, and by his skirmishers to clean the hill-side north of the road.

These orders were obeyed, and, finding the position abandoned, Burdsall's cavalry and company *C*, 10th Indiana regiment, entered the camp about 6 o'clock a. m., where they found and took prisoners ten (10) officers, five (5) non-commissioned officers, fifty-four (54) privates, the descriptive list of which is hereto attached, and marked *A*. Colonel Beatty entered the upper camp about the same time and occupied it, taking charge of the property, among which were two brass 6-pounders, and some eighty tents, four caissons, and one hundred (100) rounds of ammunition. Colonel Sullivan, of the 13th Indiana, came in and occupied the camp on the north side of the road, and took charge of the horses, wagons, tents, tools, and implements of the rebels there.

The 8th and 10th Indiana were left in possession on the battle-field, and were charged with the duty of burying the dead. They remained until next morning, the 13th, when the whole force moved forward to their present encampment at Beverly.

Having given the details, I close my report by the following

#### SUMMARY OF THE MOVEMENT.

With strong detachments from the 19th Ohio, the 8th, 10th and 13th Indiana, and Burdsall's cavalry, amounting to 1,912 rank and file, I set out at 5 a. m. of the 11th, and by a circuitous route through a trackless mountain forest reached the Beverly road at the top of Rich Mountain, where I found the enemy advised of my approach, and in force with two 6-pounders, field-pieces, and infantry, from various circumstances judged to have been from 800 to 1,200 strong, though probably not all of them in action. We formed at about 3 o'clock, under cover of our skirmishers, guarding well against a flank attack from the direction of the rebels' position, and after a brisk fire, which threw the rebels into confusion, carried their position by a charge, driving them from behind some log breastworks, and pursued them into the thickets on the mountain. We captured twenty-one (21) prisoners, two brass 6-pounders, fifty stand of arms, and some corn and provisions. Our loss was twelve (12) killed, and forty-nine (49) wounded.

The rebels had some twenty (20) wounded on the field. The number of the killed we could not ascertain, but subsequently the number of burials reported to this date is one hundred and thirty-five (135), many found scattered over the mountain. Our troops were informed that there were one or two regiments of rebels towards Beverly, and finding the hour late, bivouacked on their arms, amid a cold, drenching rain, to await daylight, when they moved forward on the enemy's intrenched position, which was found abandoned by all except sixty-three (63) men, who were taken prisoners.

We took possession of two brass 6-pounders, four caissons, and one hundred rounds of ammunition, two kegs and one

barrel of powder, 19,000 buck and ball cartridges, two stands of colors, and a large lot of equipments and clothing, consisting of 204 tents, 427 pairs pants, 124 axes, 98 picks, 134 spades and shovels; all their train, consisting of 29 wagons, 75 horses, 4 mules, and 60 pairs harness.

The enemy finding their position turned, abandoned intrenchments which taken by the front would have cost us a thousand lives, and dispersed through the mountains, some attempting to escape by the way of Laurel Hill, and others aiming for Huttonsville. Among the former were the command of Colonel Pegram, which, unable to join the rebels at Laurel Hill, surrendered to the major general on the 13th. Our loss in the engagement, killed and wounded, is shown in the statement hereto appended, marked B. The list of prisoners taken is shown in the paper hereto appended, marked D. The invoice of property captured and turned over to the post quartermaster is hereto annexed, marked E.

In closing this report, I deem it proper to observe that, considering the inexperience of both officers and men, the fact that one-fourth were on picket guard the previous evening, and had a most fatiguing march through the rain, and with only inadequate supplies of food, their conduct was admirable.

Among those who are entitled to special mention are Colonel Lander, who, with the guide, led the way into the very midst of the action; Colonel Manson, of the 10th Indiana, who was everywhere along his line, inspiring the men by his voice and presence, and who bravely led the charge of his regiment.

Colonel Benton was ready to obey orders, and moved among his men with alacrity.

Colonel Sullivan charged with his command as the rebels were dispersing, and captured several of the prisoners. Major Wilson, of the 8th, was conspicuous for coolness and promptitude of action. Lieutenant Colonel Colgrove, of the 8th, deserves especial mention for his coolness while forming his lines of the regiment under fire. Major Foster, of the 13th, showed coolness and self-possession in forming a portion of his men under the fire of the cannon.

My thanks are due to Captain Kingsbury, my assistant adjutant general, and to Captain A. Irwin Harrison, for their valuable and efficient aid in carrying orders under fire.

The 10th Indiana was under fire for an hour and a half.

The 19th Ohio distinguished itself for the cool and handsome manner in which they held their post against a flank attack, and for the manner in which they came into line and delivered their fire near the close of the action.

I consider Colonel Beatty to have managed his men well, and to have been ably seconded by Colonel Hollingsworth and Major Buckley.

For the individuals who distinguished themselves under the eyes of their regimental commanders, I respectfully refer to the report of the colonels of regiments herewith submitted.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. S. ROSECRANS,

*Brigadier General United States Army.*

Major S. WILLIAMS, A. A. G.,

*United States Army, Headquarters Army of West Virginia.*

GEN. ROSECRANS' ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE GIVEN BEFORE A COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS.

Gen. Rosecrans' official report to Gen. McClellan was written in Beverly a week after the battle. He was called before the Committee of Congress on the Conduct of the War, to whom he made a sworn detailed statement of his campaigns, April 22, 1865. In that statement is embraced the substance of his official report to Gen. McClellan, and some additional facts and explanations elicited by the inquiries of the Committee. The discerning reader by scanning Gen. McClellan's report and this statement of Gen. Rosecrans will be able to judge whether the commanding officer was fair to his subordinate and whether he himself acted the part of a brave soldier in that engagement.

Answering questions of the Chairman, Gen. Rosecrans, after detailing the circumstances of his induction into the service, said:

Of the campaign in Western Virginia in 1861, I have to state that as soon as Garnett entered West Virginia he moved, with his main column, to Laurel Hill, on the Beverly and Webster road, seventeen miles north of Beverly;\* while Gen. Pegram, with a considerable column—seizing the pass over Rich Mountain, on the Beverly and Ripley turnpike—covered Garnett's communications with his base at Staunton.

General McClellan, having ordered Gen. Morris with all his available force to confront Garnett, moved from Camp

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\*Col. Porterfield thinks this distance does not exceed twelve miles.

Dennison to Parkersburg the 22d of June, 1861, where he assembled three small brigades and two batteries. I was ordered to accompany him, and at Parkersburg placed in command of a provisional brigade, consisting of the 8th and 10th Indiana and the 17th and 19th Ohio volunteer infantry, three months' service. Moving McCook's and Schleck's brigades to Grafton, he left me in command at Parkersburg, whence, under his orders, I moved to Clarksburg on the 28th, and immediately advanced to Duncan's farm, 15 miles distant on the road to Buckhannon, where I encamped and reported for orders.

General McClellan having determined that General Morris should watch the motions of Garnett, while he, with the remainder of his available force, should move by the way of Buckhannon and Rich Mountain to Beverly, permitted me to occupy Buckhannon, which I did by a night march; and on my arrival found, contrary to our information and belief, that the citizens were mainly loyal, and that the place had never been in the hands of the enemy for more than a few hours.

As soon as General McClellan's troops had concentrated at this point and his supplies came up, he moved, reaching Roaring creek, at the foot of the western slope of Rich Mountain, about 3 o'clock p. m. of the second day, where the command went into camp in a drenching rain. Reconnoitring the enemy, he was found posted in a strong natural position on the turnpike near the foot of the mountain—his right covered by an almost impenetrable laurel thicket—his left resting high up on the spur of the mountains, and his front defended by a log breast-work, in front of which was an abatis of fallen timber. As the second in rank, the command of the camp devolved on me, and my first duty was to know the locality. I soon learned that a young man named Hart, whose father kept a tavern in the gap at the top of Rich Mountain, was loyal, and had been seen in our camp; and that, having herded cattle, he knew the mountains thoroughly, which fact I reported to Lieut. Poe, chief engineer at General McClellan's headquarters, suggesting that search should be made for this young man and his information obtained.

On the 9th of July, Gen. McClellan, having completed his preparations, ordered a reconnoissance in force, which was made by McCook's brigade, supported by my own, and resulted in disclosing the great strength of the enemy's position without ascertaining his numbers. On returning from this reconnoissance, Gen. McClellan directed me to occupy the front with my brigade, which was to lead in the attack he intended to make the next morning. Having made the necessary dispositions, on returning to my tent an officer of my command informed me that he had found young Hart. Being brought to my tent, the young man informed me that the enemy's camp was two and three-quarter miles west of his father's house at the top of the mountain, where they had their hospital and commissary stores; that it was possible to reach the top of the mountain by a circuitous route through the forest around the enemy's left to a point within a mile and a half of the gap, whence there was a practicable sled and cart road to his father's house. He stated he had no doubt he could conduct a body of troops to this point, even in the night, but that they could not take with them any artillery. I immediately repaired to the tent of Gen. McClellan with this information, showed him a sketch, and explained it. I then asked him if he desired to see young Hart, and at his request brought the young man to his tent, where the general questioned him very carefully. I then sent Hart to my tent to await orders, and said to the general: "Now, general, if you will allow me to take my brigade I will take this guide and, by a night's march, surprise the enemy at the gap, get possession of it, and thus hold his only line of retreat. You can then take him on the front. If he gives way we shall have him; if he fights I will leave a portion of the force at the gap and with the remainder fall upon his rear." Col. Marcy, chief of staff, at once fell in with my suggestion, and the general, after an hour's deliberation, assented, stating that as one of my regiments (the 17th Ohio) was absent, he would give me the 13th Indiana, Col. Jeremiah Sullivan; and then inquired about what time I thought I could reach the point, which was a matter of importance to know, so as to time his attack. I said I supposed I might



be able to reach it by 10 o'clock on the morning of the 11th, and that I thought he could safely begin his attack on that supposition. But it was finally decided that, as unforeseen obstacles might arise to retard the time of my reaching the gap, I should take Burdsall's cavalry and send a message back every ten minutes, reporting progress, while he was to hold his troops in readiness to commence the attack the moment he heard the noise of my firing. I then gave him the following as my proposed arrangement: "The troops to be formed in front of his quarters at 3 o'clock in the morning, and to enter the forest at the front line of our pickets at daylight with one day's rations." To this arrangement he assented, and an invitation to Col. Lander to accompany me completed the programme.

The troops entered the forest in the morning in a terrible rain-storm. As it was now daylight, and the enemy might discover our movements, on consultation with the guide and Col. Lander, who accompanied him, it was deemed best to incline much further to the right than had been at first intended, which lengthened the route. At 11 a. m., weary and wet, the column halted on the brink of a deep valley, the opposite side of which was the last ascent, except a small one, before reaching the road that would bring us to an open wood with a gentle descent three-quarters of a mile to the object of our march. From this point I despatched to Gen. McClellan stating this fact, and that, owing to the excessive roughness of the road, almost impassable for horses, and to the fatigue of the animals, I should not send another despatch until I had something of importance to communicate. Down through this gorge, and toiling slowly up the opposite ascent, the head of the column arrived at, within a short distance of the top of the mountain, a cleared field, after eleven hours' marching, at about 1 p. m., where, halting, the men were directed to rest and lunch, while, with the guide and Col. Lander, I reconnoitred our position.

To the east, apparently near our feet, though seven miles distant, lay Beverly. Cavalry horses were hitched in the streets; the end of a tented encampment appeared on the right, partly hidden by the mountain; wagons were passing,

all indicating the presence of a considerable force in Beverly. Beyond the depression in the open ground in front of us was a low wooded crest which we had to ascend, and thence it was but a short mile to Hart's tavern. At two o'clock the column, closed in mass, was moved noiselessly and swiftly across the open ground into the edge of the forest, and thence, after some difficulty in finding the way, wound up the hill to the top of the crest, which it reached about half past two o'clock, in a terrific shower, and was fired upon by the enemy's advance guard. The 10th Indiana rapidly advanced, inclining to the right, along the crest of a steep declivity overlooking the Beverly road, halted and formed in line of battle just out of range of the enemy's musketry. The 8th Indiana, under my orders, halted in column, while the 13th Indiana, following the 10th, formed on its left and occupied a spur of the mountain covered by a thicket overlooking the field in front of the enemy's position. The 19th Ohio halting faced towards the enemy's encampment in the direction of which lay a broad well-trodden way.

The enemy, posted behind log breastworks nearly parallel to the road, opened upon us with artillery from a point on each of his flanks, while the sharpshooters occupied the line of fence in front of his position. Owing to a mistake in its movements the 13th Indiana took forty minutes to get into the proper position and to occupy the thicket in front of our left; so that it was forty minutes after three o'clock before our line of battle was ready to advance. All this time the enemy was firing on us with his artillery, which, however, did us but little damage, most of the shots going over the heads of the troops, while we could do nothing but annoy them by our skirmishers. When the line was ready to move, I brought down the 8th Indiana, and directed it, taking advantage of the cover on the right of our line, to make its way to and capture the artillery on the enemy's left. By mistake Col. Benton took the direction of the centre. He was then directed to take advantage of a roll in the ground and charge another gun of the enemy's towards our left. Misunderstanding this, he passed through an interval between the wings of the 10th, and began deploying in front of his left.

I directed him to remain in that position, and the colonel of the 10th to form his left wing in column on the left platoon, and be ready to charge the enemy's line in due time. The whole line advanced. Col. Sullivan had been ordered to take a portion of the 13th, which had remained in column for want of space, and moving around on the left of the field, to charge the enemy's battery on the right. Comprehending the rawness of our troops, and desirous of putting an end to the artillery fire as soon as possible, I placed myself at the head of this charging column of the 13th Indiana, and urged it forward at a double-quick. Col. Sam Beatty, of the 19th Ohio, conforming the movement of his command to that of our advancing line, took advantage of the first opening to form half of his regiment in line of battle, and delivered a terrific volley opportunely—just as the charging column of the 13th had got within about a hundred yards of the enemy's breastworks. At this the enemy began to waver. A second volley from the 19th threw him into confusion, whereon our whole line, charging with a terrific shout, leaped the enemy's breastworks and pursued his fugitive army into the woods. The battle was over. The enemy's dead and wounded covered the ground. Two pieces, the only artillery he had, fell into our hands. Flushed with success, our troops scattered very much through the woods, and it became a matter of critical importance to reassemble them without delay. This was substantially accomplished by a little after six o'clock. While the troops were reassembling, a quartermaster of the 44th Virginia was captured down the road towards Beverly, who reported that his regiment had reached a point within three-quarters of a mile of the battle, but did not dare to come up. This, and what had been seen from the top of the mountain, made it evident that our position was an isolated point between the rebel intrenched camp on the west and another force of unknown strength in the vicinity of Beverly. No firing was heard in the direction of the intrenched camp. No attack had therefore been made by Gen. McClellan. There was no assurance of succor from that quarter; nothing to prevent the enemy taking his measures to overwhelm us without the possibility of prevention from our main body. What was to be

done? We could not go to Beverly, for we were already separated from our command by the enemy, whose strength had been stated to me by —— and McC. as probably from 5,000 to 8,000 men. It was too late to undertake an advance on the enemy's camp, distant nearly three miles of a road skirted by almost impenetrable thickets of underbrush. In this emergency Capt. Conklin was detailed to take charge of the captured pieces of artillery, and the troops were placed in position to prevent a surprise and to defend themselves from attack coming either from the enemy's camp or from Beverly. By the time these dispositions were made it was dark. Meanwhile a messenger had been sought among our cavalry, and none could be found who would undertake to carry word to Gen. McClellan. The night was dark, cold and rainy. The wounded of both sides filled all the outhouses, and were huddled together in a tavern; in fact, every building was used to keep them from the inclemency of the weather. The troops turned out six times during the night, on account of the picket firing on the front, expecting an attack of the enemy.

At three o'clock in the morning a prisoner was brought in, from whose answers I inferred that the enemy were attempting to evacuate, and accordingly made disposition to move on them at daylight, which was done. On reaching the enemy's camp our advance discovered a white flag, and soon it was surrendered with all that remained of Pegram's force, about a hundred and seventy men, with all their artillery, transportation, camp and garrison equipage and quartermaster's stores. Pegram, with the remainder of his force, had escaped during the night to the north of us with the intention of reaching Gen. Garnett; but the news of the capture of the gap, which had been carried to Beverly by the 44th Virginia, was despatched that night to Garnett, whose position, was, as I have before stated, seventeen miles north of Beverly. Gen. Morris was in his front to prevent his advance, and he could retreat only by Beverly on the turnpike, or take an inferior road in a northeast direction through a rough country down Cheat River and strike the northwest Virginia turnpike, which leads from Clarksburg to Winchester, near the Maryland line. He chose the latter, apprehensive that he would be intercepted

by our force coming over Rich Mountain. On the next morning, at seven o'clock, Gen. Morris began to pursue him. This movement cut off the retreat of Pegram, who sent in a flag of truce and surrendered to Gen. McClellan, who, on the morning of the 12th, as soon as he had learned of the capture of the rebel camp, marched through it to Beverly, and thence followed the 44th Virginia, and whatever other rebels had retreated by the turnpike, towards Staunton, continuing the pursuit to the top of Cheat Mountain.

The committee will remember that Gen. Morris overtook the rear guard at Carrick's ford, where, during a sharp skirmish, Garnett fell, and his troops, continuing their retreat, finally escaped to Winchester. Thus, by the capture of the gap at Rich Mountain, the keystone was knocked from the rebel arch of defence, and they were driven from Western Virginia.

I forbear to take notice of the various reports and statements concerning this battle which have been privately and publicly circulated. The committee will find the facts here stated substantially in my official report, which is that of the four regimental commanders who accompanied me in that expedition—Col. Jerry Sullivan, 13th Indiana, now brigadier; Col. Samuel Beatty, 19th Ohio, now brigadier; Col. Benton, 8th Indiana, now brigadier; and Col. (afterwards brigadier general) Manson, and is hereby made a part of my testimony.

As no explanation was ever, to my knowledge, given for the failure of our main force to attack the enemy on the 11th, it is proper to say that while we were seizing the gap, not only was the firing of the enemy's artillery heard, but the musketry and cheers of our own men in the final charge on the enemy's line were heard by the men in the camp, a mile and a half in rear of our main force.

It should also be added, that so strong was the impression that our column had met with disaster in the conflict at the gap, that Gen. McClellan sent his chief of staff from the front back to the camp to arm all the teamsters, lest the enemy, after having destroyed my brigade, should fall upon and cut the main body to pieces.

As it is probably known to some members of the commit-

tee that sundry reports of this battle, at variance in many material points with its true history as here given, were in circulation in Washington during the latter end of 1861 and the early part of 1862, I have been careful to enter into details, giving all the facts of importance in relation to the actions of the general commanding, his staff officers, and those who served with me in the affair.

By Mr. Gooch:

Question. Do you know any reason why Gen. McClellan did not make an attack, with the force immediately under him, in his front, as was contemplated when you left him?

Answer. I know of no reason why he did not, and of no reason why he should not have done so.

Question. If he had made that attack, as was contemplated between you and him, in your opinion what would have been the result?

Answer. The enemy, having no attack made on his front, had despatched to the gap one half of his artillery and a considerable force in addition to that usually stationed there. The probabilities are that had the attack in front been made, we should have beaten the enemy and destroyed or captured nearly his entire force that day, instead of allowing them to run away through the woods, individually or in squads, during the night subsequent to the capture of the gap, as they did. At all events Gen. McClellan was bound, as a military man, to have made the attack in his front, for the purpose of preventing the enemy from falling on me with too heavy a force.

Question. Do you know whether Gen. McClellan has ever assigned any reason why he did not make the attack, as contemplated between you and him?

Answer. The only reason I have ever seen assigned is contained in his official report, published as a campaign document, and prefaced by the remark that he had not, until recently, had in his possession the necessary papers to enable him to write a report of the campaign of Western Virginia. In that report he says:

“About half past two the firing which we had heard in the direction of the gap, and which apparently receded, ceased.

Shortly afterwards an officer appeared in the rebel camp and made a speech. We could not hear the words, but from the cheers which followed many supposed it had fared badly with our detachment. Immediately orders were given to cut roads to be cut and guns got into position, intending to open the next morning, in order to relieve Rosecrans."

I am quoting from memory and may not give the words exactly, but I give the substance. Gen. McClellan adds that he was delayed by accidents the next morning in opening, until the arrival of a messenger announcing the capture of the rebel camp. This is all I have ever seen or heard from him in reference to the matter.

Question. If he had supposed that the enemy was getting the better of you, why should he have delayed until the next morning before commencing the attack?

Answer. Such a mode of relieving me was the surest way to enable the enemy to destroy me. The only sure relief he could have given would have been to attack the enemy the instant he heard the first firing.

Question. I understand you to say you expected to reach the top of the mountain by 10 o'clock in the morning. In reality you did not arrive there until half past two o'clock. Why was that?

Answer. In reply to Gen. McClellan's question about what time I thought I could reach the top of the mountain I stated that I thought 10 o'clock would be the latest. That was on the supposition that I should start as soon as possible after our conversation. But, as I have already stated, it was, on the suggestion of Gen. McClellan, determined that the head of the column should not quit the main road and enter the forest at our front picket line until daylight. A further cause of delay, which has been stated, was this: that, owing to the fact that we were undertaking this march mainly in the daytime, Gen. Lander thought, on consultation with the guide, and I decided, that it would be wiser to take a more circuitous route, passing farther from the enemy. This lengthened our march, making it over ten hours.

Question. How far distant from you were Gen. McClellan and the main body of our army at the time you were engaged with the enemy?

Answer. In a straight line it was probably two miles; by road it was two and three-quarter miles to the rebel lines, and our troops were formed in line of battle in front of the rebel lines just out of range of their fire.

Question. Then he must have known from the sound of your guns, if in no other way, when you commenced your attack upon the enemy and the continuance of the fight?

Answer. Certainly.

Question. How many men had Gen. McClellan under his command, including the force which accompanied you?

Answer. I do not know exactly, but believe at least between 6,000 and 7,000 effective men.

Question. How many men did you take with you when you made your movement to the top of the mountain?

Answer. Either 1,743 or 1,843; I forget which. My official report shows the number, and is made a part of my testimony.



## THE RETREAT AND DEATH OF GEN. GARNETT.

### HIS WITHDRAWAL FROM LAUREL HILL.

The Confederate position on top of Rich Mountain was not lost till late in the afternoon of the 11th. The entrenched camp at the west base of Rich Mountain was not abandoned by Pegram until after midnight succeeding. But Gen. Garnett, more than a dozen miles distant as the crow flies, knew that a battle had been fought; and anticipating, or learning, the result, left his position on the west side of Laurel Hill at dusk that evening and crossed to the east side of the mountain.

Here he halted, waiting perhaps for definite news and in distressing uncertainty after he received it whether or not to attempt a retreat through Beverly. Col. Porterfield, in the appended correspondence, says he was with Garnett's command at this time, and that Garnett could easily have removed all doubt about the line of retreat to the south if he had but used his cavalry scouts to ascertain.

It is not to be assumed that Gen. Morris' videttes were not alert; but if they were, Garnett's withdrawal across the mountain must have been managed very skillfully, for Morris did not know till next morning what had happened. Then Capt Benham, apparently one of the most intrepid of his subordinates, took the lead in the pursuit. But Garnett had the whole night's lead, and the weather conditions

were such as made desperate work for both pursuers and pursued. A mountain storm set in, and roads and streams alike soon became almost impassable.

At Carrick's Ford of Cheat River, the rear of the retreating army was overtaken; and in the sharp engagement which followed, Gen. Garnett, while personally directing the placing of skirmishers, received a fatal bullet.

Gen. Morris' troops, from excessive fatigue and lack of food were compelled to forego farther pursuit. The Confederates passed through to Winchester road; and although Gen. Hill, commanding at Grafton, had imperative orders to intercept them, he was unable to organize a force with the celerity necessary to effect this. Gen. Hill wrote a lengthy report explaining the difficulties and disabilities which the sudden order imposed on him.

Following reports of Gen. Morris and Capt. Benham, of the Union army, and of Col. Taliaferro and others of the Confederate, give the most interesting available facts.

#### MORRIS' PURSUIT OF GARNETT.

July 13th, 6:00 A. M., Gen. Morris wired Adj. Gen. Williams that after resting two hours, his advanced column—Steedman, Dumont and Milroy—moved at 3:00 in pursuit of Garnett. He had left Belington the day before with four wagons of hard bread and pork—all the wagons available, the rest having been sent to Philippi for supplies. As previously reported, he had but seven wagons to the regiment. His men had necessarily to be restricted in rations, and must be so as they advanced. He en-

closed a telegram from Capt. Benham, one and a half miles east of New Interest at 6:10 A. M.

July 14th, Gen. Morris wrote Williams from Carrick's Ford. Steedman's 14th Ohio, in advance, with two sections of Barnett's artillery, next Dumont's Seventh and then Milroy's Ninth Indiana, started from Leadsville at 4:00 o'clock in the morning under immediate command of Capt. Benham. About 6:00 o'clock a drizzling rain set in, which by 9:00 o'clock had become quite heavy.

The enemy left the main turnpike and turned towards Cheat River, crossing two branches of Laurel Mountain over a narrow and difficult road. Owing to the heavy rains, the roads were very difficult for both men and provision wagons. By 11:00 o'clock the rain had become a drenching storm and so continued for several hours, making the mountain roads nearly impassable. At 2:00 o'clock, the whole command was up to Carrick's Ford, after a march of 18 to 20 miles.

#### MORRIS TO MCCLELLAN.

July 16th, from Brigade headquarters, Elliott's Farm, near Belington, Gen. Morris reported again to Adj. Gen. Williams:

"On the morning of the 14th, I reported to you the operations up to the routing of the Confederate forces at Carrick's ford, about 2:00 P. M. of the 13th. I have to add that while our troops were halting for rest, our scouts followed close upon the route of the enemy four to six miles farther, and on the morning of the 14th we learned they were fully fifteen miles in advance. About noon of the same day, we started for Saint George, in pursuance of orders, which place we reached at night. Without provisions other than the beeves sent by Gen. McClellan, and in the exhausted state of our command, it was impossible to pursue farther. At Saint

George we heard that Gen. Hill had met the flying enemy and captured or dispersed the remnant. Our scouts discovered four miles west of our route 12 wagons mostly loaded with new clothing and had taken possession of them. On the morning of the 15th, we left Saint George and after a march of 23 miles reached this place at 9:00 A. M.

#### THE BATTLE AT CARRICK'S FORD.

In Capt. Benham's report of his pursuit of Gen. Garnett's army, dated "Camp 8 miles south of St. George, July 13, 1861." he says that as they approached the Ford they came upon the rebels' train, the last half of which was just crossing the river. The enemy had taken a strong position with his infantry and artillery upon a precipitous bank, 50 to 80 feet high, on the opposite side of the river, while the ground on the other side where the Union troops were was low land, nearly level with the river. He says:

"Steedman's regiment, in the advance, opened fire most gallantly upon them; which was immediately returned by their strong force of infantry and by their cannon. Upon which Barnett's artillery was ordered up and opened on them with excellent effect.

"As soon as I perceived a position by which their left could be turned, six companies of Col. Dumont's regiment were ordered to cross the river about 300 yards above them to pass up the hill obliquely from our right to their left and take them in the rear.

"By some mistake—possibly in the transmission of the order—this command crossed at about double this distance and turned out, first, to their right; which delayed the effect of this movement. After some fifteen minutes, however, this error was rectified, and the hill being reported as impracticable, this command—now increased to the whole regiment—was ordered down to the ford, under close cover of this hill on their side, and there to take them directly in front at the road.

“The firing of Steedman’s regiment and of Milroy’s now well in action, with repeated and rapid discharges of the artillery during this movement, decided the action at once. As Dumont reached the road, having passed along and under their whole front, the firing ceased and the enemy fled in great confusion, Dumont’s regiment pursuing them about one mile farther and having a brisk skirmishing with their rear for the first half of that distance, during which Gen. Garnett was killed.

“The enemy would still have been followed up more closely, and probably to the capture of a large portion of their scattered army, but that this was absolutely impossible with our fatigued and exhausted troops: who had already marched some eighteen miles or more in an almost incessant violent rain, and the greater part of them without food since the evening—and a portion from noon of yesterday—so warm had been their pursuit on their hasty retreat from Laurel Mountain, twenty-six miles distant.”

#### SUMMARY OF RESULTS.

Capt. Benham thus sums up the results of the pursuit:

“The capture of about forty loaded wagons and teams, being nearly all their baggage train and including a large portion of new clothing, camp equipage and other stores; their headquarters papers and military chest; two stand of colors and one piece of fine rifled artillery; while the commanding general, Robert S. Garnett, is killed: 15 to 20 of the enemy killed and nearly 50 prisoners. Our own loss, 2 killed and 6 or 7 wounded.”

## CONFEDERATE ACCOUNTS OF THE DEFEAT.

### THE KILLING OF GEN. GARNETT.

Col. B. B. Taliaferro, 23rd Virginia Infantry, under date of Monterey, August 10th, reported to Gen. H. R. Jackson, commanding at that point:

“On the evening of the 12th, Gen. Garnett bivouacked at Kaler’s ford, on Cheat River, the rear of his command being about two miles back on Pleasant run. On the morning of the 13th the command was put in motion. Before the wagon train had crossed the first ford, half a mile above Kaler’s, the cavalry scouts reported the enemy close upon our rear with a very large force of infantry well supported by cavalry and artillery. First regiment ordered to take position across the meadow and hold the enemy in check until train had passed the river, and then retreat behind 23rd Virginia.

“In a few minutes, the enemy’s skirmishers were seen running along the opposite bank, which was low and skirted by a few trees. A hearty cheer having been given for President Davis, we opened upon the enemy, who replied with heavy fire from their infantry and artillery. After continuing the fight until nearly every cartridge had been expended and until the artillery had been withdrawn by Gen. Garnett’s orders, and as no part of the command was within sight of supporting distance, I ordered the regiment to retire. It would have been impossible to hold the position, and already nearly thirty of my men had been killed or wounded.

“After marching half a mile, I was directed by Col. Starke to move on to the next ford, where I would overtake Gen. Garnett. On the farther side of this ford, I met Gen. Garnett, who directed me to halt my regiment 150 yards distant around the turn of the road and to detail for him ten good riflemen, remarking that ‘This is a good place, behind this driftwood, to post skirmishers.’ A few minutes later Col. Starke rode by and said Gen. Garnett directed me to march

as rapidly as I could and overtake the main body. In a few minutes, Lieut. De Priest reported to me that Gen. Garnett had been killed. He fell just as he gave the order to the skirmishers to retire, and one of them was killed by his side.\*

"About daylight we reached R ed House, in Maryland, on the Northwestern Turnpike, near West Union. At this last place a large force under Gen. Hill was concentrated; but it did not attack us, and we moved the same day as far as Green-land, in Hardy county, and after seven days arduous march, reached this place."

#### REPORT OF COL. RAMSAY.

Col. J. N. Ramsay, commanding at Petersburg, wrote Col. Jackson, July 16th, that his command was there, marching to Harrisonburg: "Not many killed, but hundreds missing. We have suffered awfully. We were near starvation. What is left of this army will not be fit for service in a month."

#### UNION SENTIMENT IN THE VALLEY.

In a despatch from Maj. M. G. Harman, commanding at Staunton, dated July 15th, he says, speaking of the retreat of Garnett's army to Monterey:

"I would urge upon you the great importance of keeping the enemy from ever touching this country; for Union men in great numbers would be found here in this county and other counties in the Valley if the Federal troops were here to protect them. It is necessary, to keep our people loyal, to keep the enemy from having an opportunity to tamper with many of them."

Harman wrote Gen. Lee, July 15th:

#### MCCLELLAN'S FLUNK.

"The enemy displayed no courage, after defeating us on top of Rich Mountain, or the forces at Camp Garnett would have been cut to pieces."

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\*See letter of Col. Porterfield in appended correspondence.

This refers to the failure of McClellan to attack the entrenchments at the west base of Rich Mountain when he heard the guns of Rosecrans' attack on De Lagnel upon the top of the mountain.

CONFEDERATE COMMENT.

In a letter from Jefferson Davis to Gen. Johnson, at Harper's Ferry, July 10th, Mr. Davis said: "Garnett is lamentably weak, but reinforcements now on the way will, I hope, prevent a junction of McClellan and Patterson."

A letter of Brig. H. R. Jackson, written from Monterey July 16th, regarding Garnett's retreat, said:

"There can be no doubt that during the earlier days of last week the enemy engaged the attention of Gen. Garnett at Laurel Hill by repeated feints and skirmishes, and on the afternoon of the 11th turning the left flank of our position at Camp Garnett in large force. He succeeded, after a protracted (and on our side a desperate) struggle, in seizing the summit of the mountain which had been held by a small body of our troops. Camp Garnett was thereupon abandoned."

July 18th, Richmond received report of "the disastrous retreat of Garnett's command to Monterey."

A letter from Richmond, July 20th, notified Brig. Gen. W. W. Loring that he was assigned to the command of the Northwestern army, and was ordered "to keep the enemy on the other side of the Allegheny ridge."

Brig. Gen. H. R. Jackson, commanding the Northwestern army, *ad interim*, wrote the Adjutant General's office, July 22nd:



“From an intelligent officer—Capt. Hall—one of the recently released prisoners, I learn that while in the enemy’s camp he had intimate intercourse with Gen. Rosecrans, who told him that by means of telegraphic railroad facilities Gen. McClellan could at any time concentrate troops even to the number of 50,000 in Northwestern Virginia. Rosecrans also said they were on the lookout for Wise.”

## PEGRAM'S RETREAT AND SURRENDER.

### ABANDONMENT OF FORT GARNETT.

That portion of Col. Pegram's command who were defeated by Rosecrans at Hart's, on top of Rich Mountain, retreated eastwardly and reached Beverly. The main body who, with Col. Pegram at their head, vacated Camp Garnett, at the west base of the mountain, in the night, proceeded northeastwardly through the mountains with the expectation of joining Garnett's army. But Garnett had begun his retreat too soon for them to reach him; and Gen. Morris, pursuing sharply, cut off the only road by which Pegram could have followed Garnett. Thus he found himself, after McClellan's arrival at Beverly, between two Federal armies, with no convenient way for escape. There was one trail across the Cheat range, known as "The Old Seneca Path," by which he might have got out of reach if his men had been in condition; but they were so reduced by hunger and fatigue that the alternative of flight into a mountain region where it would have been impossible to subsist, drove Pegram to surrender to McClellan; and he accordingly, about midnight of the 12th, from "Mr. Kittle's house, near Tygart's Valley river, six miles from Beverly," addressed a communication to "The Commanding Officer of the Northern Forces, Beverly," offering, in view of the reduced and almost famishing condition of his force, to surrender.

Gen. McClellan sent his reply by Adj. Gen. Williams, with escort, who arrived at Pegram's head-

quarters a little after sun-up next morning, addressed to "John Pegram, Esq., styling himself Lieut. Col. P. A. C. S.," accepting the surrender.

Col. Pegram asked only that they "receive at your hands such treatment as Northern prisoners have invariably received from the South." Gen McClellan, in his acceptance of the surrender, said he would receive the "officers and men" as "prisoners of war" and "treat them with the kindness due to prisoners of war. But," he said, "it is not in my power to relieve you or them from any disabilities incurred by taking arms against the United States." In a subsequent exchange of prisoners, Col. Pegram was refused parole, because he had been an officer in the United States army.

#### COL. PEGRAM'S REPORT TO RICHMOND.

Col. Pegram, at Beverly, July 14th, wrote a report to the Adjutant General at Richmond, touching the disaster which had overtaken his command, "not knowing," he remarks in the opening, "where a communication will find Gen. Garnett." Col. Pegram describes the engagement on the top of Rich Mountain with some particularity:

#### THE BATTLE AT HART'S.

"The battlefield was immediately around the house of one Hart, situated at the highest point of the turnpike over the mountains and two miles in the rear of my main line of trenches at the foot of the western slope of the mountain. The intricacies of the surrounding country seemed scarcely to demand the placing of any force at Hart's; yet I had that morning placed Capt. De Lagnel, of the Confederate artillery, with five companies of infantry, numbering in all about

310 men, with instructions to defend it to the last extremity against whatever force might be brought to the attack by the enemy, but also to give me timely notice of his need of reinforcements. These orders had not been given two hours before Gen. Rosecrans, who had been conducted up a distant ridge on my left and then along the top of the mountain by a man, attacked the small handful of troops under Capt. De Lagnel with 3,000 men.

"When from my camp I heard the firing becoming very rapid, without waiting to hear from Capt. De Lagnel, I ordered up reinforcements and hurried on myself to the scene of action. When I arrived, the piece of artillery was entirely unmanned, Capt. De Lagnel having been severely wounded; after which his men had left their piece. The limber and caisson were no longer visible, the horses having run away with them down the mountain; in doing which they met and upset the second piece of artillery which had been ordered up to their assistance.

"Seeing the infantry desert the slight breastworks thrown up that morning by Capt. De Lagnel, I used all personal exertions to make them stand to their work, until even I saw that the place was hopelessly lost.

"On my way back to camp, I found the reinforcing force under the command of Capt. Anderson of the artillery in the greatest confusion, they having fired upon their retreating comrades. I hurried on to camp and ordered the remaining companies of my own regiment in camp to join them. This left my right front and right flank entirely unmanned.

"I then went back up the mountain where I found the whole force drawn up in line in ambush near the road under command of Maj. Nat Tyler, of the 20th.. I called their attention and said a few encouraging words to the men, asking them if they would follow their officers to the attack; to which they responded by a cheer. I was here interrupted by Capt. Anderson, who said to me: 'Col. Pegram, these men are completely demoralized and will need you to lead them.' I took my place at the head of the column, which I marched in single file through the laurel thickets, and through almost impassable brushwood, up a ridge to the top of the moun-

tain. This placed me about one-fourth of a mile on the right flank of the enemy; which was exactly the point I had been making for.

"I had just gotten all the men up together and was about to make my dispositions for the attack when Maj. Tyler came up and reported that during the march up the ridge one of the men in his fright had turned around and shot the first sergeant of one of the rear companies, which had caused nearly the whole company to run to the rear. He then said that the men were so intensely demoralized that he considered it madness to attempt to do anything with them by leading them on to the attack. A mere glance at the frightened countenances around me convinced me that this distressing news was but too true, and it was confirmed by the opinion of three or four of the company commanders around me. They all agreed with me that there was nothing left to do but to send the command under Maj. Tyler to effect a junction with either Gen. Garnett, at Laurel Hill, or Col. W. C. Scott, who was supposed to be with his regiment near Beverly.

"It was now six and a half o'clock P. M., when I retraced my steps with much difficulty back to camp, losing myself frequently on the way and arriving there at eleven and a quarter o'clock. I immediately assembled a council of war of the field officers and company commanders remaining, when it was unanimously agreed that after spiking the two remaining pieces of artillery, we should attempt to join Gen. Garnett by marching through the mountains to our right. This act was imperative, not only from our reduced numbers, now being about 600, and our being placed between two large attacking armies, but also because at least three-fourths of my command had no rations left; the other fourth not having flour enough left for one meal.

"Having left directions for Sergt. Walke and given directions to show a white flag at daylight, I then called companies G and H, of the 20th regiment, with which and seven companies of Col. Heck's regiment, I started at one o'clock A. M., and without a guide, to make our way if possible over the mountains where there was not the sign of a path, towards Gen. Garnett's camp."

They arrived at Tygart's Valley river at seven o'clock the next evening, having made twelve miles in eighteen hours. Here Col. Pegram was informed there was a small Confederate camp at Leadsville, three miles distant. He hired a horse and rode forward, but when in sight of Leadsville church he stopped at a farmhouse, where he was informed that Garnett's army had retreated eastward, pursued by 3,000 of the enemy. Col. Pegram went back to his command, which he found in confusion. Another council of war was held later in the evening. It was found there was but one road over which escape was possible. This would lead them within three miles of Beverly (then occupied by the enemy), over Cheat Mountain and other mountain ranges, into Pendleton county; and it was known that along this road it would be found impossible to obtain subsistence.

One of the captains had escaped by this route after the retreat from Philippi, and thought they could do it again; but as it was then 11:00 P. M., and if this road were to be taken it would have to be done at once without allowing the half-famished men to get anything to eat, all the officers except the captain referred to and one other, voted that it was impossible to do anything but surrender; and these two agreed that the chances of escape if they took the road to Pendleton were "very slim." Accordingly, Col. Pegram wrote and despatched his note to Gen. McClellan, as previously set forth.

#### REPORT OF COL. HECK.

Col. Jonathan M. Heck, under whom before the breaking out of hostilities the militia at Morgantown

had refused to muster because he was a secessionist, who had entered the Confederate service under Porterfield, had been sent by Garnett to take charge of Camp Garnett at the west base of Rich Mountain and was second in command at the time of the engagement, wrote a report to "Col. R. R. Howison," Richmond, some time after the surrender, but without date.

In his account of preliminary operations at Rich Mountain, Col. Heck says Pegram very much underrated the enemy's strength in front and wrote to Gen. Garnett for permission to surprise and attack him. He thinks this report of Pegram kept Garnett from ordering him to fall back, as he had no doubt Garnett would have done, at the same time falling back from his own position to Cheat Mountain, had he learned, or even supposed, the force in front of Pegram half as strong as it was. Heck makes this statement as "due to the memory of Gen. Garnett, who fell a victim to a combination of circumstances over which he had no control." The reader will note in Col. Porterfield's correspondence, appended to this, that he discredits Col. Heck's theory as to Garnett's ignorance of the magnitude of Gen. McClellan's army.\*

Following statements are from Col. Heck's report:

#### REPORT OF COL. HECK.

"On the morning of the 11th a cavalry sergeant of the enemy who had been detailed to assist in keeping up com-

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\*Pegram says in his report: "If I had known the number of the enemy and their means of getting to my rear—which all my so-called reliable woodsmen informed me was impossible—I would have retreated the night before, cutting down trees on both sides of the mountain, thus giving time to Gen. Garnett to retreat by way of Beverly to Huttonsville."

munication between Rosecrans, who had started away early that morning with six regiments of infantry to turn our left flank, and Gen. McClellan, who with the main body of the enemy and eighteen pieces of artillery was to take us in front as soon as Rosecrans made the attack in the rear, missed his way, rode up to our line and was wounded and captured. Col. Pegram learned from him that the enemy had moved a force to our rear, but could not learn by which flank. Pegram had already, in anticipation of a rear attack, sent two or three companies to the top of the mountain. He now sent two more companies and a piece of artillery to reinforce the picket on the mountain, which made in all a force of about 300 men, under command of Capt. De Lagnel.

“Col. Scott, who was marching with a regiment to reinforce Gen. Garnett, was requested by Pegram to hold a road one mile west of Beverly. This was done because Pegram thought Rosecrans would try to turn his right flank by a circuitous route coming in at that road. But the enemy made the attack about 11 o'clock on the mountain from the left flank. After Capt. De Lagnel was wounded, Capt. Curry, of the Rockbridge Guards, took command and conducted the retreat. The enemy having charged and taken the piece of artillery, were bayoneting our wounded soldiers, who had been shot down at their posts. Pegram at once determined to take half the command and charge and retake the position; and immediately organized and marched from our camp, leaving me in command with instructions to hold that position at all hazards. In the meantime the enemy was busy making preparations for an attack in front, cutting roads and placing a large number of pieces of artillery in position.

“About 11 o'clock at night, having heard nothing further from Col. Pegram, his adjutant and other officers insisted on a council of war. I called a few officers together and repeated to them my orders from Col. Pegram instructing me to hold the position till I heard from him, which might not be before morning, as he had not then determined whether he would attack Gen. Rosecrans that night or in the morning. We were about returning to our several posts, as we were expecting an attack every moment, when Col. Pegram returned and



informed us that he had determined not to make the attack at Hart's house and had sent the men he had selected for that purpose away under command of Maj. Nat Tyler; and he ordered me to call in all the companies and pickets and retreat immediately in the direction of Gen. Garnett's camp at Laurel Hill.

"Soon after sun-up on the 12th we were in sight of Beverly, and could see the river valley for many miles both right and left. Had we gone directly down this valley, we could have escaped, as the enemy did not enter Beverly until one P. M. of that day. I suppose we would have gone down into the valley at this point if Col. Pegram had not mistaken some of our (Lilley's) men for the enemy's advance. As it was, we were kept in the mountains, marching slowly in the direction of Garnett's camp at Laurel Hill."

Col. Heck says the surrender of Pegram was opposed by himself and Capt. J. B. Moorman, of the Franklin guards. They were in favor of crossing Cheat Mountain by the road near Beverly, which would have led into Pendleton county. "Capt. Moorman," Heck says, "had marched his company by the same route after the defeat at Philippi and thought it could be done again."

#### REPORT OF MAJ. NAT. TYLER.

Maj. Nat. Tyler, in a report made by him, says that the fight began about 11 o'clock and lasted three hours, when the enemy succeeded in getting to the road between the rebel position and Beverly. He says Col. Pegram ordered him before the firing ceased to reinforce Capt. De Lagnel with the 20th regiment.

"And as we were marching up the mountain, he determined to take command of a storming party and attempt the recapture of Hart's house. Before arriving in position he ascer-

tained the impossibility of successfully storming the enemy's position, and ordered me to continue the retreat with the 20th regiment while he returned and brought the remainder of the command. We reached Beverly at daybreak."

#### REPORT OF ENGINEER JED HOTCHKISS.

Engineer Jed Hotchkiss, who had assisted Col. Heck in laying out Camp Garnett, made a report to him some time after the battle. He mentions that about 50 men had reached Beverly at 11 o'clock A. M. of the 12th "and found the people helping themselves to abandoned commissary stores, expecting the enemy every moment." At the conclusion of his report Hotchkiss refers to some friction which had occurred between Heck and Pegram as to the command at Camp Garnett:

"Pegram being ordered by Gen. Garnett, as he himself said, to report himself and command to you, he arrogantly demanded the command of the post because of his superiority of rank, before asking you for it or you had refused to give it to him; that you expressed a willingness to give it up to him if you could be assured that such was the desire of Gen. Garnett; and afterwards by his arbitrary and selfish direction of affairs, and in the opinion of many concerned and engaged, brought about the disasters that attended the battle of Rich Mountain. To my personal knowledge, you sent one that came to you with information in reference to the designs or operations of the enemy in turning our left flank to communicate the same to Lieut. Col. Pegram the day before the battle."

Hotchkiss says the Confederate countersign the night following the battle was "Indian;" that the Union countersign that night was the same, and that this enabled the escaping Confederates to pass the Union pickets at one point when challenged by them.

## DEATH OF CONVENTIONIST HUGHES.

John N. Hughes, a member of the Virginia Convention, was killed in mistake by Confederate troops while attempting to carry a despatch on horseback from Col. W. C. Scott, of the 44th Virginia to Col. Pegram. In a letter from Maj. Harman, at Staunton, to Gen. Lee, Harman says that Mr. Hughes "was sent by Col. Scott to Col. Pegram and was killed by our men." During the progress of the fight on top of Rich Mountain, Col. Scott's regiment was posted at a road junction one mile west of Beverly with instructions to remain there in expectation that Pegram's position was going to be flanked on his right and that the flanking force would approach Beverly by this road intersection. Col. Scott had a letter from Pegram requesting this, and had been instructed by Garnett to comply. In his report Col. Scott says:

"The letter was read to most of my officers and to Mr. John N. Hughes, who resides in Beverly, with whom I had become acquainted in the late convention, and who had expressed a determination to join my regiment. He said he was perfectly acquainted with the road on which Col. Pegram desired me to take position."

Col. Scott was in momentary expectation of some word from Pegram relieving him from this station and directing him to reinforce Pegram.

"But getting no such message, or any information from the fight, and becoming impatient, I determined to send a messenger myself. I therefore ordered Mr. J. N. Hughes, who volunteered for the purpose, to go to Col. Pegram and know from him whether or not he wished my services at any other point than the one I then occupied, and if so to send me a

guide. If not, I ordered Hughes to bring me information of whatever was going on. He dashed up the mountain at a rapid gallop."

"After waiting a long while for return of Hughes," Col. Scott says Lieut. Cochrane, of the Churchville cavalry, came down the turnpike off the mountain, "with a few of his men," and addressing himself to the Colonel, explained the situation on the mountain and accompanied him, at the head of his regiment, back up the mountain. Lieut. Cochrane, March 6, 1862, wrote a letter to Col. Scott, in response to request to "state what occurred while I was with you on the 11th day of July last in relation to the Rich Mountain fight." In this letter Lieut. Cochrane says:

"On the way up the mountain, I informed you of the death of Hughes, and you requested me not to mention it to the men, as it might dampen their spirit."

The report current afterwards was that Hughes on the mountain had met a Confederate force and supposing them to be Union troops had ridden forward and hurraed "for Lincoln," and that they had immediately riddled him with bullets. Lieut. Cochrane's remark was suggestive of the idea that it was his detachment which Hughes had met with this unfortunate result. In hope of clearing up a doubt as to the precise circumstances, the writer, Dec. 26, 1903, addressed an inquiry to Col. Porterfield, residing at Charlestown, Jefferson county, to ask for his recollection of the matter. His reply to the inquiry is contained in his letter of Jan. 4, 1904, appended. Later, through the courtesy of the postmaster at Beverly, the writer was enabled to obtain the follow-

ing statement from Col. S. N. Bosworth, 31st Virginia Inf. C. S. A., who was present at the Rich Mountain fight and has always lived at Beverly:

“Mr. John N. Hughes was killed on the top of Rich Mountain by the Confederate troops that fought there. He thought them to be the enemy and turned his horse to return to Scott's regiment, when they fired on him. He was buried in a trench with twenty-one other Confederate soldiers, and was after the war removed to Mount Iser, Beverly, and there reinterred. His body was known by his shawl, in which eighteen bullet-holes were found.”

A later note from Col. Bosworth said:

“I think the statement that Mr. Hughes was killed by a small detachment of Confederate troops that was supporting Lieut. De Lagnel's piece of artillery is correct. I was near there but not on the ground at the time, and I have no doubt that is the true version of it. Mr. Hughes was somewhat intoxicated at the time—at least it was so reported.”

## RESUMÉ.

The reader who has followed this narration can hardly have failed to note two things regarding the Confederate invasion—one, the inadequacy of military plan; the other, the imbecility of execution. Gen. Lee begins the movement on Northwest Virginia in fashion more academic than military. He proceeds on the assumption that the people there will submit without a struggle, as they did in East Virginia, to the Confederate assumption of control by virtue of the secret league of usurpation and violence entered into by the Convention with the emissary of the Southern Confederacy.

Officers to organize military forces and take possession of the country are appointed in districts where they dared not allow it known they held such commissions. The designation of Alonzo Loring to take charge of the western terminus of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, to hold and control it for the Confederacy, with authority to call out and organize volunteers in the Panhandle counties, to any one familiar with the circumstances and the state of local public opinion at that time, was a proceeding little less than fantastic. It was on a parity with Gov. Letcher's telegraph order to raise the Confederate flag on the Wheeling custom house.

Maj. Boykin, who was first sent to Grafton to take charge there of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and the interests of the Confederacy, in co-operation with Maj. Loring, was politely requested by a delegation

of citizens to avail himself of the next train for his departure. When Col. Porterfield went to Grafton later, he found neither officers nor men to take his orders or support him. Both he and Boykin despatched Gen. Lee that the whole region was cold and inhospitable to Confederate pretensions.

It is apparent Gen. Lee was ill-informed as to the state of public sentiment in Northwest Virginia,—as ignorant, possibly, as Gen. McClellan was touching danger of negro insurrection. In consequence, valuable time was lost in organizing Gen. Lee's army of occupation. He evidently supposed the Secession element in the Northwest was so preponderant it would rise, in response to his call, and take possession of the country. This was a serious mistake.

Further pursuing this erroneous lead, Gen. Lee planned to hold Grafton, the junction point of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, with a few companies of raw volunteers. He expected these to be collected in the adjacent country, and this failing, arranged to have them gathered up along the route from Staunton to Tygart's Valley. The Federal authorities could not have permitted this possession of the railroad junction if it had taken a hundred thousand men to prevent it. Col. Porterfield, with the raw recruits who had been sent him, was compelled to abandon the post precipitately on the first demonstration of the Federal advance. Following this, he is surprised and driven out of Philippi, as result of conditions for which he was little responsible.

Next, Lee's Adjutant General,—protege of Jefferson Davis, with whom he had served in the Mexican war—is sent out with a force of several thousand

men, for a purpose nowhere well defined. There is no evidence of any purpose or expectation that Gen. Garnett would move north of the railroad line. His confidential despatches show no plan for any such advance; nor even a definite purpose to capture Grafton; nor to do any other specific thing except to disable the railroad. He takes possession of the passes in the westerly mountain range, places a small force at the west base of Rich Mountain, and posts his main army at the Laurel Hill where the Tygart's Valley river cuts through it, a dozen miles or more north from Beverly. Then, a little later, he tells Gen. Lee he finds the place not defensible against good light infantry.

Here he is confronted by Morris, with a force inferior in numbers to his own; and assumes more the attitude of an army of observation than one of aggression. After a little, Gen. Garnett seems to realize that he does not know just what he is there for. He discusses his situation in despatches to Gen. Lee and explains its disabilities. He finds the means of defense available to the Union commander so far exceeds his own means of attack that an opportunity to assail Grafton, or the railroad at any other point, is too remote a contingency to be of value; and he suggests whether the game of holding an army idle for the mere chance of such a contingency is worth the cost.

McClellan's advance was not ill-planned or executed, though it might be thought the rout of Porterfield at Philippi should have been better followed up. There was no real obstacle to Morris going to the southern end of Tygart's valley and sealing up



the Cheat Mountain pass. Col. Kelley's instructions contemplated pursuit as far as Beverly, and he was to have command of the whole force after the junction at Philippi; but Kelley's wound—at the moment supposed to be mortal—interfered with this programme; and with the limited knowledge of the country or resources of the enemy coming forward, the commanders were but prudent in the halt at Philippi. That Porterfield's men expected McClellan to take the entire valley is apparent. Some of them went across the mountains from Beverly into Pendleton, in full persuasion the Federals would overtake them if they attempted to reach Cheat Mountain pass. They knew the valley was bare of Confederate troops, and none nearer than Staunton, but the Federal officers did not know this.

Regarding the decisive action at Rich Mountain, the credit for the Union victory there belongs to Rosecrans and the men who with him, through eleven hours of storm, climbed up the precipitous and thicket beset mountains to the rear of the rebel breastworks at Hart's. True, McClellan contemplated a flank movement before his arrival in front of Pegram's entrenchments. Any commander with a map before him must have done that. But when confronted by Pegram's entrenchments at the foot of Rich Mountain, it appears he contemplated a direct attack in front. The real problem there was like the one confronted by Wolfe at Quebec: how to find the way around to the enemy's rear.

Rosecrans, second in command, after viewing the formidable defenses of Pegram, was fortunate in finding a son of the man who kept the little tavern on

the mountain top, and in learning the young man was loyal to the Government. He took young Hart to McClellan's tent on the night of the 10th and explained to the General his plan to head a force under Hart's guidance for a flanking march around through the wooded mountains to the south, to come in on the mountain-top east of Hart's. McClellan, with the abundant caution of his nature, hesitated, though his chief of staff assented to the plan at once. With the indecision which characterized McClellan's future military career, he seemed to shrink from the ordeal of action. He took an hour to think it over; and, finally consenting, delayed the start next morning.

Rosecrans told the joint committee of Congress it was agreed that night between McClellan and himself that the moment McClellan heard the guns of Rosecrans' attack on top of the mountain, he was to open on Pegram's entrenchments in his front at the foot of the mountain. Such an understanding was a matter of course; necessary to Rosecrans' security and to the success of the whole movement. Pegram if left undisturbed, would send part of his force to help resist Rosecrans' attack at Hart's. In fact, —McClellan not attacking,—this is just what happened. Pegram, finding he was not to be attacked, did send a detachment to the aid of De Lagnel. But it was too late, as the day was already lost.

The firing at Hart's was plainly heard in the camps of both McClellan and Pegram. McClellan not only failed to attack but actually withdrew to a safer distance, leaving Rosecrans to his fate—so far as that depended on help from the main army and the commanding General. Rosecrans did not need their help.

He not only routed the enemy on the mountain top, but, after a night of anxiety, marched down the mountain at daylight and took possession of Pegram's abandoned camp, in McClellan's front, and sent a messenger to acquaint his superior that the road to Beverly was now open.

The fall of Rich Mountain brought Garnett quickly to face the crisis he must have looked forward to. Pegram's defenses were at least five miles nearer Beverly than Garnett's main army. The danger of having his communications cut at Beverly must have been constantly before Garnett. Yet he was constrained by the presence of Morris in his front to remain at Laurel Hill and guard against attack. How to do this and still be prepared to get away via Beverly in the event of adversity at Rich Mountain, was the problem. No retreat east or north could be anything but disaster. East by the "Old Seneca Path" there were formidable mountain ranges practically uninhabited, where an army must perish from lack of food. To the Northeast were long stretches of mountain roads, of which he knew nothing, to be traversed in furious storms, and raging streams to cross, before he could reach the Winchester road, and probability of interception once that road was reached.

Thus Garnett had lain, with a threatening foe in front, another on his flank, at the mercy of events he could not control nor foresee. When the moment for action came and Rosecrans knocked the peg from under the defenses at Rich Mountain, Garnett's campaign—or Lee's, if it was his—went to pieces like a house of cards!

Garnett might still have escaped by way of Beverly, if he had known, or dared. The news of the Rich Mountain disaster reached him promptly, and he started to move at dusk that night. He could have had till noon next day to cover twelve miles of good road between him and Beverly. But either he became panic-stricken or was not well-informed of the state of affairs at Beverly. His nerve seems to have failed him at the one supreme moment of his life when he needed it.

After he got his army over to the east side of the mountain, he might have turned south to safety. He turned north, and was lost; he himself—it was whispered among the officers—courting death and putting himself in the way of it as the only escape from the overwhelming humiliation he had not the hardihood to face.

## LEE'S FINAL FAILURE TO GET THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS.

THE STORY TOLD BY GEN. ROSECRANS.

Twelve days after the engagement at Rich Mountain, Gen. McClellan was directed to turn over the command of the Department of the Ohio to Gen. Rosecrans and repair at once to Washington. Referring to this in his testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, April 22, 1865, Rosecrans says McClellan left him a memorandum of what he had proposed to enable the troops, acting on the defensive, to hold Western Virginia against further attack. The main points of defense were, to fortify and hold Gauley Pass from the Kanawha valley towards Lewisburg; Cheat Mountain pass, on the Beverly and Staunton road; and Red House pass, on the Northwestern Virginia turnpike, leading from Clarksburg to Winchester.

Gen. Rosecrans' account of the remainder of the season's operations, subsequent to the departure of McClellan, is a terse and graphic statement; and the story of that part of the campaign cannot be better told than in the General's own words.

There were then, he told the Committee, ten regiments of three-year troops in West Virginia east of the Kanawha valley. They were newly raised and without drill or experience. There was one battalion of cavalry and two batteries of artillery, one of them mountain howitzers, manned by regulars. The

strength of these regiments would average about eight hundred men. In the Kanawha valley there were about 2,700 men under Gen. Cox. In all there were probably 11,000 men scattered all over West Virginia.

Gen. Rosecrans says:

"I immediately addressed myself to the task of meeting the anticipated coming invasion of the rebels. Gen. Cox was instructed to proceed to the north of Gauley and fortify that pass. To Brig. Gen. J. J. Reynolds was confided the defense of the Cheat Mountain pass, which included that of the road leading from Huttonsville to Lewisburg, which was closed by a line of field-works at a place called Elkwater, a few miles south of Huttonsville. Col. Lorin Andrews, with three and a half regiments, was posted on the Northwestern Virginia turnpike, near the point where it crossed the north branch of the Potomac, where, under the direction of Capt. Merrill, of the engineers, he threw up some field-work.

"Soon the news oozed through every pore of society that, acting on the defensive in front of Washington, the rebels intended to make an offensive campaign to recover possession of Western Virginia; that to Gen. Lee was to be confided the accomplishment of this work. Dismay and alarm pervaded the State, even reached Washington, and came to me in friendly warning from more than one of the departments of the government. Nor was it long before these rumors received confirmation. Gen. Lee, appearing in Gen. Reynold's front with a flag of truce, proposed the exchange of some of our men captured at Bull Run for the prisoners of war captured by us at Rich Mountain and Beverly and paroled by order of Gen. Scott.\*

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\*Answering later a question asked by the Chairman, Gen. Rosecrans said he did not make the exchange of prisoners proposed by Gen. Lee. He declined because he saw Lee wanted to exchange prisoners captured at Bull Run for mountaineers captured at Rich Mountain and Beverly, who knew the country and would immediately add valuable men to his strength, while the Bull Run prisoners would add nothing to the strength of the Union forces, and, in fact, could not serve with Rosecrans' command. He told Lee unless he could remedy this inequality there could be no exchange; and there was none.

"A heavy force appeared menacing us in front at Cheat Mountain, while another column, coming from Warm Springs by way of Huntsville, appeared in front of Elkwater.

"Meanwhile, Gen. Cox from Kanawha valley, informed me that while Gen. Wise was advancing on his position at the mouth of Gauley by the Lewisburg and Kanawha turnpike with a force variously estimated at from five to eight thousand men, he had information that Gen. Floyd with another column was advancing from Lewisburg with the intention of crossing Gauley above him, and attacking either our depots at Weston and Clarksburg or making his rear on the Kanawha river in the vicinity of Charleston.

"I at once despatched Gen. Cox instructions to remove his sick and all public property not absolutely necessary from the valley, and if compelled to leave to retire fighting towards the Northwestern Virginia railroad with a view to concentration in case of necessity, with Gen. Reynolds and other troops farther east. The post at New Creek station was turned over to Col. Biddle, of Gen. Burk's command, and that on the northwest road stripped of all save a nominal force to reinforce Gen. Reynolds.

"The governor of Ohio, at this time apprehending disaster to us, sent us the 28th, 47th and 30th, raw regiments of three-years troops. I also assembled all the troops that could be spared, seven regiments and a half, three of which had just received their arms, and marched from Clarksburg, by way of Weston, Bulltown and Sutton, to meet Gen. Floyd, who, having crossed Gauley, had attacked and overwhelmed Col. Tyler, of the 7th Ohio, at Cross Lanes, a distance from Clarksburg of 117 miles and about 20 miles above Gen. Cox's position at the mouth of the Gauley.

"Our column crossing Big Birch mountain on the 10th September, 1861, encamped at its foot, ten miles above Somerville, on the ground from which we had driven Floyd's outposts. Here the citizens reported that Floyd, with from 15,000 to 20,000 men, was encamped below Somerville, near Cross Lanes, on the north side of the Gauley. We could not stop to count numbers. Our only alternatives were to fight and whip or pass him and unite with Gen. Cox. Accordingly at

3 o'clock the next morning our column began to move, and by 1 o'clock p. m., after a march of fifteen miles, halted two miles from the enemy's intrenched position, having thus far had only a little skirmishing. While resting cavalry, of which we had but two companies, our staff began to reconnoitre. Firing between the enemy's advanced guard and the head of our column soon followed, and by half past two o'clock Col. Lytle was in the camp of the rebel Col. Reynolds, who had retreated into the thick forest, the entrance of which, marked with numerous paths leading to the rear, satisfied me that the citizens' reports of the enemy being intrenched were probably correct. I therefore directed the leading brigade (Benham's), consisting of three of my best regiments, to advance cautiously, but firmly, and to feel the enemy's position. Unfortunately, its commander, excited and impressed with the idea that the enemy was retreating, though emphatically cautioned to beware of masked batteries, advanced through the forest without deploying skirmishers, until the head of the column emerged in front of an intrenched line, and a battery of seven or eight pieces behind a parapet, where it received a terrific artillery and musketry fire, which brought it to a stand. This sudden and fierce fire caused the commander to send for reinforcement and artillery. Despatching orders for the other four regiments to follow and halt at the edge of the woods, I proceeded to the front and reconnoitred the enemy's position. Meanwhile Col. Robert McCook, whose brigade followed next, sent a portion of the 9th Ohio to our right, where it also drew the enemy's artillery, accompanied by heavy volleys of musketry. His line was found to extend across a bend in the Gauley river, its flanks resting upon almost inaccessible precipices five or six hundred feet above the Gauley. I now prepared for the assault, and to that end sent Col. W. S. Smith, with the 13th Ohio, supported by the 28th Ohio, under Col. Mohr, to our left, where he reported he could find cover from the enemy's musketry until within about fifty yards of his flank, whence he thought he could ascend to the height on which their breastworks were built, and, by a sudden rush, take them. It was sunset before the fierce firing at that point indicated that Smith's column was at work.



Meanwhile Col. McCook had formed the 9th and the 47th Ohio as a storming column, to be supported by the 10th Ohio, to attack the battery on the enemy's centre. The troops were much jaded, and to inspire them with spirit I told them I would lead them myself. At this time the firing on our left receded, showing our attack there had not succeeded. It was also dusk, and an officer brought the report that our column, under Col. Smith, had found it impracticable in the darkness and depth of the ravine to accomplish its work. It therefore became necessary to defer the attack until morning. Taking good care to leave the impression that we were immediately in their front, and ready for the attack, the troops were quietly and carefully withdrawn to a good position, just out of reach of the enemy's fire, where, exhausted with the marching and fighting of the day, they lay down on their arms. At five o'clock next morning Col. Ewing, from the advance, brought in a contraband, who stated that during the night the enemy had withdrawn across the Gauley, destroying the foot-bridge and sent the ferry-boats over the falls, leaving only a small portion of his troops on the north side. Orders were immediately given to advance, and Col. Ewing took possession of the camp and the few prisoners he could find skulking through the woods unable to make their escape. Orders were immediately given to drive the enemy from the opposite side of the river, and hold the ferry, which, under Gen. Benham, was to be put in condition for crossing our troops as rapidly as possible. The Gauley, for a distance of nearly twenty miles, rushes through a chasm cut in the rocks from five to eight hundred feet deep, with precipitous sides, the current, excepting at a very few places, being too swift to cross, even with a skiff. Carnifex ferry, at the mouth of Meadow river, a southern tributary of the Gauley, is a level reach about two hundred and fifty yards long and one hundred and twenty-five yards wide, above and below which the water dashes over the rocks white with foam. The descent from the north side is by a winding road about a mile and a half in length from the line of the enemy's intrenchment. It was extremely difficult to obtain materials, and it took twelve days to replace the ferry-boats the enemy had destroyed.

Meanwhile Gen. Cox, from the mouth of the Gauley, despatched that after Wise had skirmished heavily with his advanced guard, he retired towards Lewisburg, and that he, Gen. Cox, should cross the Gauley in pursuit. I replied that he should advance carefully, until we could get the means to cross and join him. He obeyed the instructions, and so soon as a single small ferry-boat was ready, Gen. McCook, with two and a half regiments, by working night and day for forty-eight hours, crossed and joined him at the head of the Sunday road. It was also our misfortune to have been compelled to move so light that our ammunition and provisions were both nearly exhausted, and the trains to replenish them, which had been directed to follow us, were so delayed by the terrible rains which set in the night after the battle that they did not reach us for nine days thereafter. And the country was unable to supply us, which would have so long delayed us, even had we not been hindered by want of means of crossing the Gauley. The enemy having retreated towards Lewisburg, Gen. Cox followed him, taking possession of one or two lines of intrenchments on his way, and reaching the top of Mount Sewell, where I joined him on the 28th, leaving orders for the remainder of my troops to follow as rapidly as possible. It was pending this movement, when Gen. Lee, learning that I was marching to attack Floyd, attempted to force Reynolds from his position at Cheat Mountain, but was badly beaten. From that time he seemed to be in observation, awaiting the result of the operations under Floyd and Wise. Gen. Reynolds, with rare intelligence and sagacity, kept him perpetually harassed, until finally the battle of Carnifex ended the enemy's operations in the Kanawaha valley.

"Gen. Lee next determined to concentrate all his force on the Lewisburg road to oppose the advance of our victorious troops. When, therefore, we reached the top of Mount Sewell, we found him strongly posted in front of us, intrenched with an army of about 14,000 men; we had in our advance on his front 5,300 men and four and a half regiments coming up from the rear. One of the most terrible storms ever known in Western Virginia set in. Eighteen horses perished in one night at headquarters. The Gauley rose fifty feet. Forage,

clothing and commissary stores at its mouth, down the Kanawha, in spite of our utmost exertions, were damaged or swept away by the flood. The roads became almost impassable. The country between the mouth of the Gauley and Mount Sewell, a distance of thirty-eight miles, never abundantly supplied, was now almost destitute of forage. It was evident that as, all told, we could not number to exceed 8,500 effectives, we had no reasonable chance of driving Lee, with near twice that number, from an intrenched position, nor could we have compelled Lee to retire. Would it have been advisable to advance any farther at that season of the year, when it was impossible to have subsisted either animals or men, and when, moreover, we had nothing to accomplish by an advance of a small column far into the interior, beyond support and in proximity to the enemy's great rail communications? Having spent two or three days in examining the country with a view to future operations, the troops were withdrawn to the vicinity of the Gauley, where prompt measures were taken to supply them with clothing, an imperative necessity, from the fact that the continual marching during the past four months, and their remoteness from depôts of supplies had rendered it impracticable heretofore, and the troops were so naked that in one regiment I counted one hundred and thirty-five men without pantaloons on parade. This position was held because it covered all the country in its rear, and still threatened and compelled the enemy to watch us. While thus occupied I learned from various sources that Gen. Lee had determined to drive us from our position by sending a column through Raleigh Court House to strike the Kanawha below us, and cut off our supplies, while he should take advantage to attack us on our front, and desperately damage us in the retreat to which he expected to force us. Knowing the country better than Gen. Lee, I felt certain his column west of the river would be obliged to take the route by Fayette Court House over Cotton mountain, and strike the river opposite the mouth of the Gauley, where our rear guard was posted, and took measures accordingly. Nor was I disappointed. On the 27th October the head of Floyd's column, passing through Fayetteville, seized the road

opposite Miller's Ferry, where lay McCook's brigade, and the next day opened with artillery from the top of Cotton mountain, a distant and comparatively harmless fire on our position and depots at the mouth of the Gauley. Between our forces and Floyd's ran New river, through a narrow chasm from seven hundred to a thousand feet deep, cut in the rocks. The water whirls and foams through this channel, with but two short level reaches in twenty-five miles. One of these, at Miller's ferry, the enemy watched. About four miles above was a small pool, known as Townsend's ferry, to which there was a descent by a foot-path and a small ascent leading from the opposite side to the plateau, southeast of Fayetteville. Having satisfied myself of the possibility of using this as a place of crossing by which to surprise the enemy, I ordered the means therefor to be prepared, which consisted in sawing down the trees to avoid noise, and lowering by ropes over the cliffs materials for two ferries, one formed of wagon boxes laid side by side across two parallel poles, to which they were bound by two others lying on the tops of the boxes and secured to the lower ones by rope lashings. Over this was stretched canvas paulin. The other was what is known in the west as a bull-boat, covered with paulin. These were to be passed to and fro by a rope stretched across the river, which here was not too wide to admit of it. The work was pushed with the utmost secrecy and despatch, under the direction of Maj. (now major general) Crawford, and during a continued rain of seventy hours. The plan of operations was as follows: The bridge which lay next above Gen. Cox's, at the mouth of Gauley, passing down secretly to a point six miles below, being reinforced by troops brought up from Charleston and other points on the river below, was secretly to cross the Kanawha at the mouth of Loup creek, and lie concealed until our preparations as above described were made for the crossing. When that was done, Gen. Cox was to commence skirmishing with the enemy, whose artillery had been driven from the front of Cotton hill.

The commander of the Loup creek force was to send a column of 1,000 men across the mountains to Cassidy's mill, four miles west of the enemy's position, and about the same dis-

tance from Fayetteville, which lay seven and a half miles in his rear, and while this detachment was on its way was to march with the remainder of his forces up the river, and, in conjunction with Gen. Cox's troops, drive the enemy from Cotton hill, and prepare to attack him in his encampment on Laurel creek at its southern base. As soon as his detachment should have reached the mill this attack was to begin. While thus drawing the enemy's attention, Gen. Schenck was to move simultaneously to cross New river with 2,700 men at Townsend's ferry and seize the enemy's line of retreat near Fayetteville, announcing the success of this operation to the command in the enemy's front. Thus Floyd's force would be hemmed in beyond the possibility of escape. To be in readiness for any movement of Gen. Lee co-operating with Floyd by attacking us on the Lewisburg road, thorough watch was to be kept on that road towards Mount Sewell, and McCook's brigade with our artillery was to hold it, or a point near Hawk's Nest, which offered such difficulties to the advance of an enemy as would have enabled him to hold Gen. Lee for at least twenty-four hours. Our troops on the west side, having taken Floyd, were, in that case, to march to Bowyer's ferry, cross New river seven miles south of Fayetteville, and place themselves, 6,000 strong, on the Lewisburg road in the rear of Lee's position, which would have put him wholly in our power. The execution of this plan proceeded until the ferry-boats were ready; but the exceedingly violent rains had raised New river so that the small level at Townsend's ferry disappeared, and the river there, as elsewhere, was but a torrent, over which it was impossible even to ferry a skiff. When this became certain Gen. Schenck's command was ordered to move with all possible despatch to the mouth of Gauley, and cross the Kanawha at the falls, where means were in readiness.

On the morning of November 11, Gen. Cox's troops attacked and drove the enemy's advance guard from Cotton hill, where the head of the Loup creek column arrived before noon, and pushed on over the mountain, attacked the enemy's rear guard at Laurel creek, his main body having retired from his encampment there to Dickinson's farm, three miles further south.

At 12 o'clock on the same day the detachment, 1,300 instead of 1,000 strong, arrived at Cassidy's mill, on the flank and rear of the enemy, and there waited for orders while watching for the advance of Lee on the east side of the mill, and the movement of our column over the river, as well as that of Gen. Schenck, who, by marching all night, reached the mouth of Gauley on the morning of the 12th, and began crossing. Our column on the enemy's front, on the side of the mountain, lay on their arms from four o'clock in the afternoon of the 11th until the next morning, though its commander had ample and explicit orders. Hearing nothing from that front until late in the morning of the 12th, at 10 o'clock I despatched Capt. W. F. Rainolds, topographical engineers, aide-de-camp, to ascertain what was the matter. At about 2 p. m. he found the command about half a mile south of the foot of the mountain, lying on their arms, and after inquiry as to what was the matter, rode to the front beyond our advanced skirmishers to some hastily-built breastworks, thrown up by the enemy at Dickinson's farm, opposite Miller's ferry, the day before, and found them deserted. Returning, he informed our commander, who expressed surprise, and immediately set about ordering a move. But the column only reached the enemy's deserted camp at about 11 o'clock that night, when it halted. Meanwhile the detachment at Cassidy's mill, instead of moving across to Fayetteville, only three or four miles distant, was ordered to march four miles down the stream to join the rear of this column, seven miles and a half north of Fayetteville, which it did. The enemy had retreated about midnight of the 11th, an advanced guard hearing the movement, which was not more than three miles from the main body, and reporting the same to the column headquarters as early as 2 a. m. of the 12th. This put Floyd about twenty-four hours ahead. Our troops halted here, and the commander, Gen. Benham, sent me the following despatch, viz.:

"ONE MILE FROM DICKINSON'S—11½ P. M.

"GEN. ROSECRANS: I push forward with the chance of catching Floyd's train. Do not let me be interfered with, though he has a long start. Two great blunders, made by my two best

officers, have put me twenty-four hours behind Floyd. I should have been only twelve hours had it not been for this. I intend to take his train. It is safe for all to come on, as I am pushing to Raleigh.

“Respectfully, etc.”

On the forenoon of the 14th our advance came up with the enemy's rear guard, with which it had a smart skirmish. Meanwhile, Gen. Schenck with, his command, had followed as rapidly as possible, and, being senior in rank, was ordered to assume the command until my arrival on that side of the river. Gen. Schenck sent his adjutant general, Maj. Piatt, to the front to ascertain the condition of affairs, and sent all the subsistence he could get forward on unharnessed train animals to supply our hungry men, who were out of rations, and to give such orders as might be deemed prudent in the premises. The major met a messenger from Gen. Benham with despatches to Gen. Schenck, informing him that he had information which led him to believe Lee, with a considerable force, was at Bowyer's, urging Gen. Schenck to come and meet him, and proposing that their united forces should proceed at once in that direction. But, proceeding to the front, the major ascertained that our troops were exhausted, out of rations, and in the then condition of the roads could neither be supplied nor had they much prospect of catching the enemy or his trains, which, of course, were sent in advance of his retreating forces. Moreover, a terrible snow and rain storm came on; the roads became desperate, and it was perfectly manifest that further pursuit would be much more likely to damage us than the enemy. Under these circumstances Gen. Schenck gave orders to discontinue pursuit and return to Fayetteville, where supplies could reach him, and whence, subsequently, I ordered all troops, except Gen. Schenck's, to return to their old positions. Thus Floyd escaped; but his column had retreated in a most demoralized condition, leaving some ammunition and camp equipage behind.

Gen. Lee did not carry out the plan of attack he had originally proposed on the Lewisburg road, the condition of the roads between us and Mount Sewell having interposed almost insuperable obstacles; and, moreover, Gen. Lee himself having been

called about that time east under orders for Charleston, most of Lee's troops retiring from the position in front of Mount Sewell to an intrenched camp at Meadow Bluff; while Floyd's troops went to Dublin Station, on the Southwest Virginia and Tennessee railroad. Thus ended the enemy's campaign against us in Western Virginia—in defeat and failure—and the people, during the winter, established an effective civil government, which has ever since continued.

As the civil administration of a department commander is an important element of duty, in closing the statement of my campaign in Western Virginia it will be proper to say that the people of Western Virginia gave testimony to their satisfaction with my administration by a unanimous vote of thanks from both houses of the legislature, which was passed during the session of 1861-'62.



## McCLELLAN'S ABANDONMENT OF THE KANAWHA VALLEY.

Is Easily Persuaded by a Kanawha Delegation.—Explanations by the General and by Judge Summers.

McCLELLAN EXPLAINS TO GEN. SCOTT.

The following is Gen. McClellan's explanation, written to Adj. Gen. Townsend from Cincinnati, June 1, 1861:

"I had intimated in preceding despatches an intention of moving on the valley of the Great Kanawha, and in fact matured my plans for carrying that intention into effect in such manner as to render all resistance hopeless, with the design of effecting the occupation, as I did that of the Grafton line, without firing a shot.

"My view of our course is that we should not cross the frontier without being fully assured that our assistance is demanded by the Union men and that our movements should be in such force as to preclude the possibility of resistance.

"I had a long interview this morning with Judge L. Ruffner and Col. B. F. Smith, both of Kanawha valley. \* They came accredited by Hon. V. Horton, of Pomeroy, and other reliable men, and are represented as expressing the sentiment of the Union men of that region.

"My conference with them was full and frank. I told them that I did not believe it to be the will of the general government to force assistance on the Union men where there was good ground to believe that they were able and willing to take care of themselves; that should I learn that any force from eastern Virginia had entered their valley, I could

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\*Col. Benjamin H. Smith, U. S. District Attorney, and Lewis Ruffner, salt manufacturer, both resident at Charleston.

promptly drive them out; that they might count upon our aid whenever demanded; that it is necessary for them to make up their minds to take a decided stand.

"They stated that the Union feeling (shown to be decidedly preponderant by the late elections) is rapidly increasing; assert their ability to keep the secessionists under, say that they will not allow themselves to be forced into the Southern Confederacy, and deprecate sending any troops there for the present. I have therefore thought it prudent to submit the matter to Gen. Scott, the more especially as I think no ill effects can follow from some delay; for I have information which satisfies me that there are no East Virginians nor Confederate troops in that region, and that they cannot move them there at present.

"These Kanawha gentleman approve of the Grafton movement; and I have determined, until I receive further instructions from Gen. Scott, to modify my original plan so as to accomplish the same result in a manner that will not be obnoxious."

It seems pertinent to remark that Gen. McClellan's "view" that the Union armies should not "cross the frontier" except on request of the Union men south of it, nor without an irresistible force at command, is rather startling from the military point of view. Under this rule of action, the United States armies could not have entered a single insurrectionary state. Gen. McClellan's proneness to mix his political views with his military duties, so fatal to his reputation as a commander and so injurious to the country, it thus appears, developed at a very early stage of his career.

Hon. George W. Summers, Col. Benjamin H. Smith and Lewis Ruffner had gone to Gallipolis to persuade the Union commander there not to cross the river. He told them he had no orders to cross, but he was liable to have such orders; so Messrs. Smith and Ruffner went on to Cincinnati to urge Gen. McClellan

to keep out of the Kanawha valley. Mr. Summers—the ablest, most important, most influential of the three—did not accompany them.

Mr. Summers had been a member of the Virginia convention. His course at Richmond, and his printed declarations after his return home, indicated that he was in sympathy with (or under the influence of) the Confederate cabal.

Col. Smith was U. S. District Attorney. He was regarded as loyal. So was Mr. Ruffner, who was an old man, of great ability; a salt manufacturer; a brother of Dr. Henry Ruffner, distinguished for his anti-slavery attitude, who died at Charleston before the year was out. Lewis Ruffner afterwards took part in the loyal reorganization at Wheeling. Mr. Summers did not.

#### THE EARLY ATTITUDE OF KANAWHA.

The Union men in Kanawha were not sufficiently pronounced in their loyalty to the United States to be represented in the convention which gathered at Wheeling, May 13th, 1861, to organize resistance to the transfer of Virginia to the Southern Confederacy. Mr. Summers had promised Union members of the convention at Richmond that he would co-operate in their movement to resist the Confederate usurpation; but the promise was not kept. Mr. Ruffner went to Wheeling as a member of the General Assembly, and became, ex-officio, a member of the June convention, which reorganized the government of Virginia. Mr. Smith late in the session of the convention which met at Wheeling in November, 1861, to frame a constitution for the new State of West Virginia, obtained a

seat in that body as a delegate from Logan county, though a resident of Kanawha, upon petition of a few refugees who were under protection of an Ohio regiment. His subsequent part in the proceedings of that convention indicated that his object in getting into it was to promote certain special interests: one being protection of wild-land owners who had been delinquent in payment of taxes on their lands more than twenty years; another, to aid in engrafting on the West Virginia constitution the same old "internal improvement" policy which had proved the ruin of Virginia; third, to resist measures looking to the gradual or other removal of slavery in the new State. He and Brown of Kanawha were the champions of the slave interest in the recalled sitting of the convention in February, 1863.

Assuming that these gentlemen were simply timid and were sincere in their later avowal of loyalty to the United States government, they made a mistake in persuading Gen. McClellan to withhold troops from the Kanawha valley; and he, it is apparent, needed very little persuasion. The reasons he gives Adj. Gen. Townsend for abandoning the plan for occupation are not convincing. He says he had satisfied himself there were no "East Virginia" troops in the Valley; and, again, that there were no "Confederate" troops. If Gen. McClellan was well informed, he knew there were several hundred Confederate troops there at the time he wrote his letter to Townsend. All the troops organized anywhere in Virginia under the proclamation of Letcher and the call of Gen. Lee were "Confederate." To justify driving them out or capturing them, it was not necessary that they

should have come from Eastern Virginia. Gen. McClellan is little less than childish, also, in the remark that if he found the rebels had got into the Valley, he would promptly drive them out. This was a case where prevention was more economical than cure—as the event abundantly proved.

JUDGE SUMMERS MAKES AN EXPLANATION.

In a public address at Wheeling, in the old courthouse, the evening of August 3, 1863, Mr. Summers undertook to defend this application to Gen. McClellan to keep troops out of the Kanawha valley. From the shorthand notes of that address, the following is now transcribed:

“I was sent, with certain other gentlemen, who have been honored with the public confidence from that day to this—one of whom is now a delegate from the county of Kanawha, one of whom is U. S. District Attorney of West Virginia—to Gallipolis, where we communed with as sound a man as the land produces—I mean the representative of the Pomeroy district in the Congress of the United States, Hon. V. B. Horton. There was then a regiment at Gallipolis, the colonel of which assured us he had no orders to cross the river.

“The line of remark presented on that occasion was briefly this: The Kanawha country was not on any line of transit; troops sent to Eastern Virginia would pass by the railroads from Parkersburg and Wheeling. Through the Valley, you encounter a series of hills rendering the roads inadequate for the passage of troops or any large amount of supplies. That there was no necessity—as yet, at all events—for hostile demonstrations there; that there were some two or three companies, at the outside, of State troops organized at the time of the John Brown raid; that the counties immediately on the river had no purpose whatever, so far as we could understand to attempt to annoy the towns on the Ohio, and—least of all—to cross the stream.

"That view was concurred in by the commandant of the regiment and by all our friends at Gallipolis at the time, so far as I know; and two gentlemen went on to Cincinnati and had a conference, as I was informed, with Gen. McClellan himself, who coincided in the view that no troops need be sent there unless troops from the Confederate states were sent out to the Kanawha country. That was all we desired. We had no expectation of troops from the east. We supposed they would have enough to do beyond the mountains. We had no conception at that time of Wise and his troops coming there. Indeed, he brought no troops. He brought a lot of officers—no privates, I believe; they were all officers.

"After our return to Kanawha, to our chagrin and surprise, we understood messengers had been sent—alarmed as they were at the appearance of this regiment at Gallipolis—to the East for aid in the form of troops and munitions of war.

"From that hour, I washed my hands of the whole matter. All I had done was upon the concession that both parties were to act on this line of policy, and if one acted otherwise, of course, it relieved the other. When these troops were in possession of the valley, no opportunities occurred—at least on my part—of communicating with Ohio, with the commanding general, or anybody else, in relation to the change which had occurred."

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#### IMBECILITY OF MCCLELLAN.

Gen. McClellan, in yielding to the persuasion of these gentlemen, seems conscious he had taken leave of his better (military) judgment. His weak complaisance in the matter resulted in the occupation and despoilment of the Valley by Wise and his lieutenants, and in costly military operations to recover the country thus abandoned to the enemy. Judge Summers, a lawyer, might be excused for thinking the war then opening was to be just a bit of children's game; but

Gen. McClellan, an educated soldier, ought to have known better.

Gen. Lee had prompt advice of Gen. McClellan's agreement not to occupy the Kanawha valley, for it is a matter of official record that six days after McClellan had so informed Gen. Scott, Wise had orders to proceed thither at once.

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In connection with Judge Summers' explanation, it may be remarked that the official records afford some insight into the conditions existing in that region at that juncture. We note that,

May 3rd, Col. Tompkins, Charleston, was ordered to take command of troops called out in the Kanawha valley under proclamation of Gov. Letcher.

May 27th, Col. Tompkins, "commanding Virginia volunteers," despatches from Falls of Kanawha to Adj. Gen. Garnett:

"I have this moment express from Lieut. Col. McCausland, at Buffalo, dated yesterday, stating that the U. S. Government had sent two hundred troops to Gallipolis and will have six hundred more there today. Send down all the troops you have."

Same date, Col. Tompkins wrote Adj. Gen. Garnett explaining the situation:

"Great excitement prevails in this region. The divided sentiment of the people adds to the confusion, and except the few loyal companies now mustered into the service of the State, there are few people who sympathize with the secession policy."

May 29th, Col. Tompkins, "commanding Confederate forces in the Kanawha valley,"—from which it would seem there really were some Confederate

troops there—wired Garnett at Staunton that troops were gathering along the Ohio border, “several hundred at Gallipolis.”

May 30th, Col. Tompkins wrote Gov. Letcher that he had then 340 men under his command, and when the companies then in process of formation in that valley should have been completed, he would have about a thousand. At this time, Col. Jenkins, ex-Congressman, was raising a regiment of cavalry; which evidently is not counted in Col. Tompkins' reckoning.

Same date, Col. Tompkins issues an appeal:

“Men of Kanawha! Men of Virginia! To arms! Repel the aggressors! Preserve your honor and your rights! Rally in every neighborhood, with or without arms; organize and unite and report to those nearest to you in military position.”

It was in this posture of affairs that Gen. McClellan, two days later, notified Gen. Scott he had abandoned his purpose to occupy the Kanawha valley.

If it be true, as Mr. Summers asserts, that Wise took none but officers with him into the Kanawha, it must also be true he found on his arrival in the valley a very energetic and efficient organization ready to his hand. For nowhere in the whole theater of the war do we find more drastic measures than those immediately put in operation there by Wise. From his letter to Gen. Lee, dated July 17th, it appears Wise had then three thousand men under his command; none of whom, so far as appears, had been sent from the East. The absence of Union troops in the valley left the Union people there helpless in the presence of



even a small force of organized Confederates and made Wise as completely master there as if he had taken a large army with him.

Judge Summers did well to "wash" his hands of this calamitous business. But water will not always cleanse. Lady Macbeth declared the attempt to wash out the stain of Duncan's blood would "the whole multitudinous seas incarnadine." No more could Pilate free his hands from the innocent blood of Jesus, though he wash till Doomsday. In any case it avails no more to wash hands after the mischief is done than to lock the stable after the steed has been stolen.

Gen. McClellan never took the trouble to "wash" his hands of this Kanawha blunder. He never tried to justify or explain what he had done beyond the (quoted) letter to Adj. Gen. Townsend. If he felt any compunction for his abandonment of the Southwest to the ravage of Wise, he never gave a sign. But after a time, he seems to have perceived something had gone wrong in that part of his military preserve. June 12th he wired Townsend:

"I have started all the preparations for an expedition to gain possession of the Kanawha valley; which will probably be the end of the secession cause in that region."

They were only "preparations" and he had only "started" them; so we need not be surprised to find it was not until July 2nd (when at Buckhannon) that McClellan issued an order to Gen. Cox to move an army into the Kanawha valley. Following are the details of the order:

"Assume command of the First and Second Kentucky regiments; call on Gov. Dennison for a company of cavalry

and six guns; expedite the equipment of this force and move at once to Gallipolis; cross the river and occupy Point Pleasant; move two regiments to the mouth of Ten Mile creek, where the road from Letart Falls intersects the Kanawha river; place a regiment in reserve at Point Pleasant; entrench two guns at Letart's and four at your advanced position on the Kanawha. *Remain on the defensive*, and endeavor to keep the rebels near Charleston until I can cut off their retreat by movements from Beverly."

This order illustrates the unreadiness of McClellan, so painfully characteristic of his conduct in his larger command; where it is asserted he took as his confidential adviser a General who by his open disobedience of orders on the field more than once entitled himself to be shot by a drumhead court martial. McClellan had eminent talent for preparation. On the Potomac he developed an equally eminent talent for masterly inactivity.

Gen. McClellan was called to the command of the army of the Potomac because the newspapers acclaimed him as the "Young Napoleon of the West." This acclaim was based solely on his own grandiloquent reports; and when, a fortnight after Rich Mountain, the National capital was in a panic over the rout of the Union army at Bull Run, the "Young Napoleon" was called thither to take charge of the army of defense and restore the confidence of the country.

The facts narrated in the foregoing pages show that Rosecrans, not McClellan, was the hero of Rich Mountain, which battle was decisive of the campaign in West Virginia in 1861; which defeated and discredited Lee, and cleared the field for the restoration of civil government in Virginia.

CRISP COMMENT BY COLONEL PORTER-  
FIELD.

Rosecrans the Hero of Rich Mountain—Garnett's Mistake.

DEATH OF CONVENTIONIST HUGHES.

CHARLES TOWN, W. VA., January 4, 1904.

G. D. HALL, Esqr.

My Dear Sir: Your letter of the 26th ult., inquiring the particulars of the killing of John N. Hughes, on the Rich Mountain, July 11th, 1861, has been received. I regret that I cannot give you as full and satisfactory a statement as to how that unfortunate affair occurred as I would wish.

On the evening of July 11, 1861, when the battle of Rich Mountain was being fought, Col. W. C. Scott, with his regiment, was stationed on the road coming from a northerly direction into Buckhannon turnpike, a mile or so west of Beverly. Whilst there he sent Mr. Hughes as a messenger to Col. Pegram, whose camp was at the western base of the mountain. Col. Scott at that time heard the sound of the battle, but thought it came from Pegram's camp and not from the top of the mountain where there was a small force under Capt. De Lagnel. Whilst the battle was going on, some mounted men were seen in the road east of the Confederate position, who were mistaken for the enemy and fired upon. From the best of my recollection, Hughes was killed by that fire; but I am not *certain* that he was. Later, Capt. De Lagnel sent a squad of cavalry down to Scott's position. Mr. Hughes may have met that cavalry and been killed by them, but I do not think it at all probable that he was. I will try to get positive information on this point, and if I succeed will send it to you.

Gen. Rosecrans was undoubtedly entitled to the credit of the success at Rich Mountain. He planned and carried out the movements by which it was accomplished. Rich Mountain was

the key to Garnett's position; and when Rich Mountain was taken, Laurel Hill fell with it, and Garnett's whole army was then defeated.

McClellan should have made a feint of attack on Pegram's camp, to prevent Pegram from sending reinforcements to De Lagnel, on the top of the mountain—just as Gen. Morris feigned an attack on Garnett and held him at Laurel Hill.

The whole campaign was admirably planned and executed by the Union side; but just the reverse by the Confederate. McClellan being in command, of course, got all the credit for it. How far he acted by the advice of Rosecrans, I do not know.

As has been stated, Gen. Garnett was detained at Laurel Hill, all the time expecting an attack would be made on him there. The movements of Gen. Morris in his front were all a feint intended to hold him in his position until Rich Mountain was taken. When Garnett found that Rich Mountain was lost, and that he was defeated, he seemed to have lost his head. He then had ample time to retreat through Beverly, and save what was left of his army and his train. There was no excuse for his not knowing that the road was open to him. He had sufficient cavalry to have ascertained that fact to a certainty. The reports said to have been brought to him that trees had been felled across the road, and that McClellan's troops were in Beverly, were all false. The real state of affairs in his then front could have been ascertained by a reliable cavalry company in a single hour. But he did not use the means he had of getting the truth. He acted upon the belief that he could not retreat by the main road through Beverly, and turned off to the east upon a by-road of which he knew little or nothing, with the result that was to have been expected.

A full and correct account of this campaign would be very interesting and instructive. Some years ago Gen. E. A. Carman, formerly of the U. S. A., then living in Washington city, wrote what he entitled "The West Virginia Campaign of 1861," but I have not seen notice of its publication. He showed me his manuscript; but from my recollection I think it was rather defective.

It would require more time and labor than I could spare from my present duties to attempt to write a history of it.

Yours very truly,  
GEORGE A. PORTERFIELD.

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CHARLES TOWN, W. VA., Feb. 5th, 1904.

G. D. HALL, ESQ.,

Dear Sir: Since the receipt of your letter of the 19th ult., I have gotten a copy of the second volume of the Records of the War, and I am now inclined to agree with you that John N. Hughes was killed by a party of cavalry under Lieut. James Cochrane. I wrote to his son, who is a druggist at Bristol, Tenn., to know if he had heard his father speak of this unfortunate occurrence, or if his father had left any papers in which it had been referred to. He replied in the negative. Perhaps some of the older residents of Beverly may remember how it occurred.

The firing of some of Capt. Anderson's men upon some of their comrades was on the western side of the mountain.

It was impossible for Hughes to have passed the top of the mountain after the battle commenced. It was near three o'clock before the battle was fully begun. I heard the firing, and it lasted about three hours. Rosecrans reports that he reached the top of the mountain about a mile and a half south of the road, about one o'clock; and he was delayed by the pickets and other obstacles about two hours before he reached De Lagnel's position.

There was constant communication between Garnett and Pegram's camps until the top of Rich Mountain was taken. After that it was impossible.

The distance from Beverly to Laurel Hill does not exceed twelve miles. I passed over the road often, and did not think the distance so great as that. Almost all of Garnett's force was on the western slope of Laurel Hill. It was protected by breastworks of logs and stone.

Garnett began his retreat at dusk on the evening of the 11th of July. He moved down the turnpike to where the road to St. George enters it. There he halted his command for

awhile—about half an hour—and then turned down the St. George road. He marched all that night.

It was not known to Gen. Morris that Garnett had retreated until the morning of the 12th.

I do not place much confidence in Heck's statement. That paper was written some time after he left the service, and was made up, no doubt, from memory and from what had been told him. On page 257 he states: "The enemy \* \* \* were bayoneting our wounded soldiers who had been shot at their posts." This is not true. He says "the day after we left Buckhannon, June —, the enemy under Rosecrans, five thousand strong, occupied the place and was largely reinforced." This, of course, was reported to Pegram and Garnett. I therefore do not believe that Pegram asked Garnett for permission to go out and attack McClellan at Roaring creek.

Garnett could have retreated to the top of Cheat Mountain any night, but he would never have consented to doing so without a contest. He had just come from Richmond, where he had heard such a howl of abuse of me, for the accident to my small and destitute command, that he could not have faced his eastern friends if he had done so. I understood that he had joined in this himself. If he did, his "Arab chickens came home to roost." It was said by Capt. (afterwards General) Benham, U. S. A., who had served with Garnett on Gen. Taylor's staff in the battle of Buena Vista and was with the pursuing column and the first to recognize Garnett's body after he was killed, that he believed Garnett had wilfully placed himself where he would be shot, to avoid the mortification of his disastrous defeat.

Gen. Garnett was no doubt a brave man, and a good officer in a subordinate position; but his campaign in Western Virginia shows that he was deficient as a general in the field with a separate command. He was undoubtedly stunned by his defeat, and did not know which way to move. He should often whilst at Laurel Hill have asked himself the question: "What shall I do if Pegram should be defeated?" and have been prepared to act accordingly. He failed in this respect. He was unfortunate in having had to divide his command. It should have been united; but I know of no place west of Cheat Mountain where this could have been safely done.

Garnett was a great favorite of Jefferson Davis; had served with him in the Mexican war. In his "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," Mr. Davis compares him to Ney, the last of the rear-guard in Napoleon's retreat from Moscow.

I observe by reference to McClellan's report (page 205) that he does not give Rosecrans the credit, to which he is justly entitled, of first proposing to turn Pegram's left flank—which resulted in the defeat of Garnett's army—but intimates that it was his own original proposition; and there appears a disposition to slur Rosecrans throughout this report. There was a lack of magnanimity in this, to say the least of it.

Rosecrans found a man named Hart, of whom he inquired if it was possible to take a force to the top of the mountain south of the road. When informed that it was, he took the man to McClellan, and the result of the interview was that McClellan ordered Rosecrans on that expedition. Before that, it was said, McClellan intended to attack Pegram's front—which would have been attended with great loss of life.

I also notice that (on page 213) Rosecrans complains of an offensive letter which McClellan had written him. Gen. Rosecrans was an upright man, and proved himself to be one of the ablest generals of the war. Every word of his reports can be relied upon as true.

The Richmond authorities made a great mistake when they sent troops into Northwestern Virginia. The Hon. George W. Summers advised Gov. Letcher not to do so, and he was right. That part of the state was separated from the rest by the great Allegheny and Cheat ranges of mountains. The people generally were for the Union. Any required number of troops could be (and were) sent to their aid from Ohio, Indiana and Pennsylvania. The authorities appear not to have taken all this into consideration. The first aim of Garnett was to reach and destroy the B. and O. railroad. The destruction of that road west of the mountain would have amounted to nothing. It was torn up in the valley, during the war, from Harper's Ferry to the North mountain, the ties piled up and burned, the rails heated and bent; and yet the road was fully repaired in as little time as it took to tear it up.

It is now near forty years since the war ended; the harsh feeling engendered by it is passing away; and all right-thinking

persons must acknowledge that it is better to have a united than a divided country.

I am always ready to give you any information that I can.

Yours truly,

GEORGE A. PORTERFIELD.

P. S.—I was with Garnett's command when he began his retreat, at dusk on the evening of July 11th, also when he turned down the St. George road, about two hours later.

McClellan is in error when he states that "Our rapid march turned Garnett back and cut off his retreat." (See pages 203 and 204.) At the date of his report, 9 a. m., July 12th, when he says: "I am now pushing on to Beverly," Garnett could have been on the Cheat Mountain, if he had followed the turnpike through Beverly. Garnett no doubt thought McClellan would move towards Beverly at once—which was improbable; but even could he have done so, Garnett had the means of holding him in check until his train passed through.

McClellan needed no messenger from Rosecrans when he heard the sound of his guns on the top of the mountain.

If they were "in sight of Beverly," they saw it from the top of the mountain. McClellan does not say when they entered that town. It was not before noon, 12th.



## THE STORY OF A SCOUT.\*

Who Tried to Do a Little Business on His Own Account.  
Who Spent Near Two Years in Rebel Prisons, and  
Who Gave His Life for the Union Cause.

A few miles east of Clarksburg, in staid old Harrison county, named for one of the early governors of Virginia who was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, lived and died Leonard Kreitzer. He had been a soldier of the Revolutionary war, in a New Jersey regiment, an alien by birth, but an American patriot by choice. After the Revolution, he settled near where the hamlet of Bridgeport afterwards grew, on the borders of Simpson's creek. He was a model farmer, a good citizen, of strong individuality and high moral attributes which he imparted to a grandson, adopted by him, who bore his Christian name and whom he reared to the simple and healthful life of his farm.

Leonard Clark, who had come of this lineage on his mother's side and Huguenot blood on his father's, was at the beginning of the Rebellion a young man of family in his early prime; of medium stature, powerfully built, close-knit and muscular; face dark, handsome, leonine and resolute. He was not obtrusive in manner, nor given to needless speech. He had the instincts and breeding of a gentleman. His intelligence was of a high order; his courage undoubted.

A few years before the period with which we deal, he had a frightful and desperate encounter with a maniac. It was "in the haying." He had crossed into the meadow for a chat with a neighbor, Elder.

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\*This story, save slight correction and some omissions and additions, was contributed to the Pittsburgh *Dispatch* a dozen years ago.

They were sitting in the shade when the neighborhood school teacher, Rodney Atchison, who had dismissed for the day, came across the meadow on his way home. He approached and picked up Elder's scythe, lying near, and turning away cut a few strokes and then came back as if to lay it down. Instead of this, he sprang at Elder and with a stroke of the keen blade severed his head from the body. Turning instantly, he aimed a blow at Clark with the same deadly intent. Clark was quick and "ducked." The blade flashed over his head and only clipped a lock of hair. Clark seized the madman, and after a desperate struggle broke away from him, snatched a stake from a nearby fence and knocked the scythe from Atchison's hands, and with another blow felled him and held him till help arrived.

This was the man who in the early spring of 1861, then domiciled at Claysville, Taylor county, found himself too indignant over the presence of rebel troops at Grafton, and later at Philippi, to wait for the arrival of the United States volunteers expected from beyond the Ohio. As the only thing he could do, after Porterfield's withdrawal to Philippi, he determined to get some information as to the number and position of the Secession forces at that place. He was familiar with the mountain region south of the Baltimore & Ohio railroad; had driven cattle and in other ways traversed the roads and by-ways in Barbour and the counties south of it; and in the crisis now impending, strongly felt not only the call of his country, but the "call of the wild" itself inviting him to adventure as a scout. He accordingly, close on the heels of the retreating Confederates, set out on the

dangerous service he proposed to himself, afoot and alone, without confiding his purpose even to his family.

The story of this adventure of Clark's was told the writer at Grafton by a brother-in-law of his not long after it occurred.

In the neighborhood of Porterfield's camp, Clark was discovered by the rebel pickets, who were mounted and gave chase. The hue and cry brought others, who joined in the pursuit. He took to the woods, and thus for a time baffled his pursuers. But they were persistent; and whenever he would emerge into open ground, he would find himself headed off by horsemen, while dismounted men chased him through the brush.

Thus the chase went on hour after hour through the day, Clark by desperate exertions keeping out of the clutches of his pursuers, who might have shot him, but seemed intent on taking him alive. The country was rugged, and the toil of climbing the steep hillsides was but partly compensated by the run down the other side. Faint with hunger, worn down with running, climbing, dodging, hiding, hat lost and clothing torn, a man of ordinary physique and courage must have given up; but Clark kept up the flight, steadily heading north and drawing his enemies farther from their camp. At times he would be apparently cut off in all directions. Finally, he was so exhausted, he could go no farther, and crawled into a hollow log in a brush-heap which offered its friendly shelter. He lay there a long time listening to the shouts of his disconcerted pursuers. They could not believe he had escaped; for they had a cordon drawn

all round the piece of woods in which he had been last seen. And so they lingered in the vicinity and beat the covers in all directions. At times some came very near and Clark listened to their conversation. One man actually came and stood on the log which concealed him. At this moment he gave himself up for lost. But the man went away without making any discovery, and the friendly darkness coming on, they withdrew. Clark lay still far into the night, and hearing his persecutors no more, at last ventured to crawl out, and once more set out in the direction of the north star, which had guided many a fugitive before in that region towards havens of freedom, desperately tired, sore, cramped and hungry, but resolute and refreshed by his few hours' respite. He had not gone far before a sharp "Halt!" was followed by the whistle of a bullet. Clark did not waste a moment "on the order of his going." He plunged into the obscurity of the woods and was followed; but his incentive to escape was greater than the incentive to pursue, and his pursuers dropped off one by one till he heard them no more. He kept straight on through the night as well as his condition allowed, and when daylight smiled on him, he was in a friendly country.

Next day he reached his home and appeared among his astonished family more dead than alive. What clothes remained were in tatters; hat and shoes gone, feet bare and bleeding: the physical man in a pitiable state, but the ardor of the patriot in no wise diminished.

When Gen. Morris, at the head of Union soldiers from Indiana, arrived at Grafton, Leonard Clark

was the first to offer himself for the hazardous service of a scout. From that time on until captured, he never rested nor shrank from his dangerous duty. His services, by reason not only of his personal superiority of mind and body, but of his familiarity with the whole mountain region which became the theater of war, were invaluable to the Union commanders. His career as a scout was abruptly ended by his capture. In company with Dr. William B. Fletcher, of Gen. Morris' staff, he had penetrated some distance within the Rebel lines in Pocahontas county. Suddenly, they were confronted by the enemy's pickets, who with loaded guns demanded their surrender. Clark, by a quick dash, got under cover and could have escaped. Fletcher was caught and his captors, recognizing Clark and eager to get him, called to him that unless he came back they would shoot Fletcher. Clark realized what surrender meant for him, but satisfied they would execute their threat if he refused, he went back and gave himself up.

Clark was lodged in the jail at Fincastle, Virginia. He lay there for weary weeks, uncertain what fate awaited him, but had good reason to apprehend the worst, as it had been freely given out that he would be hanged as a spy. Weeks lengthened into months, and still the threat was not made good. Some friendly influence had interposed and saved his life. It was said William P. Cooper, who had been editor of the Clarksburg Register, and some other influential Secessionists from Clarksburg, who had been the prisoner's friends at home, had managed to placate the bloody purpose first entertained.

After nearly nine terrible months in the Fincastle jail, Clark was removed to Richmond and lodged in the Belle Isle prison, where for a year he endured the privations and hardships of Confederate prison life. Here he was freed from the shadow of the gallows; and whereas solitude had been added to the other horrors of his situation at Fincastle, here he had at least the comfort afforded by company in his misery.

He was exchanged in the latter part of March, 1863, and at once returned to Western Virginia, arriving home a few days after the Jones raid had made the circuit of the upper Monongahela valley. It was the fortune of the writer to accompany him from Wheeling to Clarksburg. He had been in prisons nearly two years and for many months had literally sat under the shadow of death. He looked like a man who had come out of the grave—his long black hair and beard contrasting with the pallor of a face bleached by protracted seclusion from the sunlight. He would not talk of what he had gone through, and one could not but respect his silence. But his spirit was unbroken, and he looked forward bravely and hopefully to the work before him. He was eager to get back into the service. Gen. Palmer, of Tennessee, who had been a prison mate and released by the same exchange, offered him a regiment if he would go to Tennessee and join his command. It was a tempting offer, but Clark's heart was set on service in West Virginia. Some friends pressed Gov. Peirpoint to give him a colonel's commission. The application failed. Many such commissions went to less capable and less deserving men.

Another hardship was added to Clark's overflowing cup. In his eagerness to get into the Union service when he went on Gen. Morris's staff as a scout, he had taken no thought as to pay. The military authorities were likewise remiss in not having him properly enlisted. So that when exchanged, he could get no pay for his lost two years, pressing as were the needs of his family.

A statement of the case was furnished by the writer, after Clark's death—as he now recalls the time—to Hon. Chester D. Hubbard at Washington, then Congressman from the Wheeling district, and by him placed in the hands of a committee to bring in a bill for the relief of those entitled to it. Whether anything was ever done, the writer is now unable to say.

But nothing could keep Leonard Clark from serving the Union cause. His brother-in-law, Capt. Tim. Roane, commanded a company in a regiment of mounted infantry. Clark attached himself to the company and set to work drilling the men. He was a magnificent horseman. The cavalry arm was his natural place. He had the intrepid qualities, if opportunity had offered, to make a great cavalry leader. Thus passed the time in which he shared the fortunes of Capt. Roane's company, holding commission as a lieutenant.

Leonard Clark was killed at Moorefield, Virginia (now West Virginia), in August, 1864, in a charge against the enemy. Though the writer saw him buried, it was more than twenty years later before he knew the precise circumstances attending his death. These were received from an officer of the regiment who was in the field at the time.

After his exchange, Dr. Fletcher, who was in Belle Isle prison when Clark was sent there, visited Clark's family and showed them the greatest consideration and kindness. The writer of this had long desired to get into communication with Dr. Fletcher, who was in charge of the Indiana Hospital for the Insane, to learn some particulars of his association with Clark as a scout on Gen. Morris's staff. Some six years ago, a letter of Dr. Fletcher's, with a portrait of him, was printed in the Chicago Tribune, relating to the effects of cigarette smoking. The writer of this immediately wrote the Doctor to ask if he was the Dr. Fletcher who had scouted with "Len" Clark in the West Virginia campaign in 1861, and been captured with him. A prompt answer came back that he was that identical person and had a good picture of Clark. It was the intention to write him very soon to ask all the particulars it was possible to obtain in regard to his service with Clark and the circumstances of their capture; but before the letter could be written, a report came from Indianapolis announcing Dr. Fletcher's sudden death. This closed the last avenue through which it had been hoped interesting details of the invaluable services rendered the Union cause by Leonard Clark as a scout in the campaign of 1861, might be obtained. West Virginia sent many brave men to the defense of the Union. Perhaps no one of them dared more, toiled more disinterestedly, suffered more, deserved more, and received less reward or recognition, than the subject of this sketch.

GLENCOE, ILLINOIS, *March, 1911.*





# Lee's Invasion of Northwest Virginia in 1861

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*By the author of*

“The Rending of Virginia”

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